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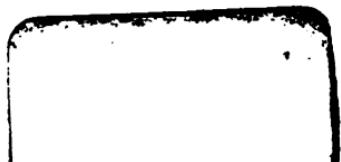
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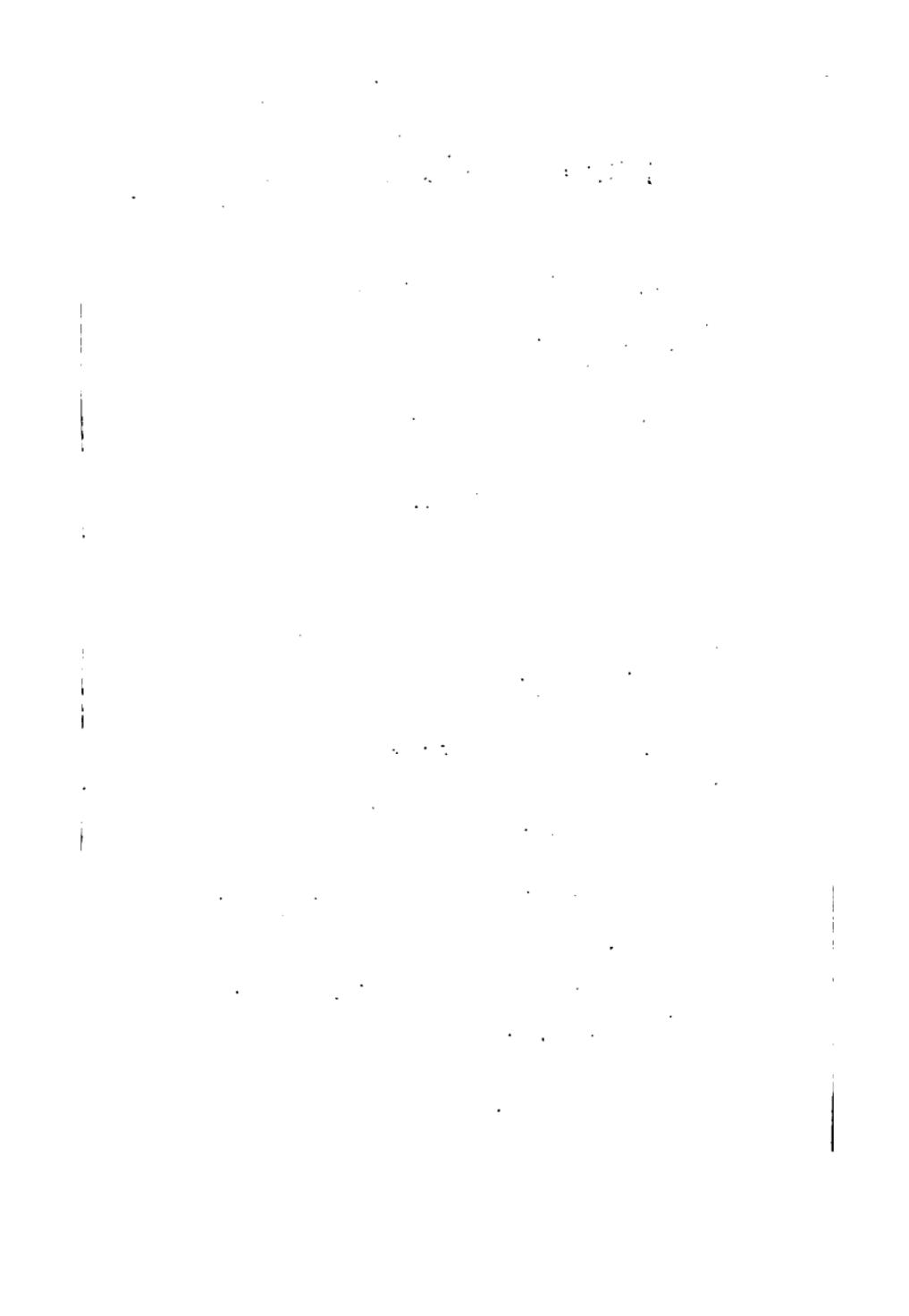


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LATE REGIUS PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY IN
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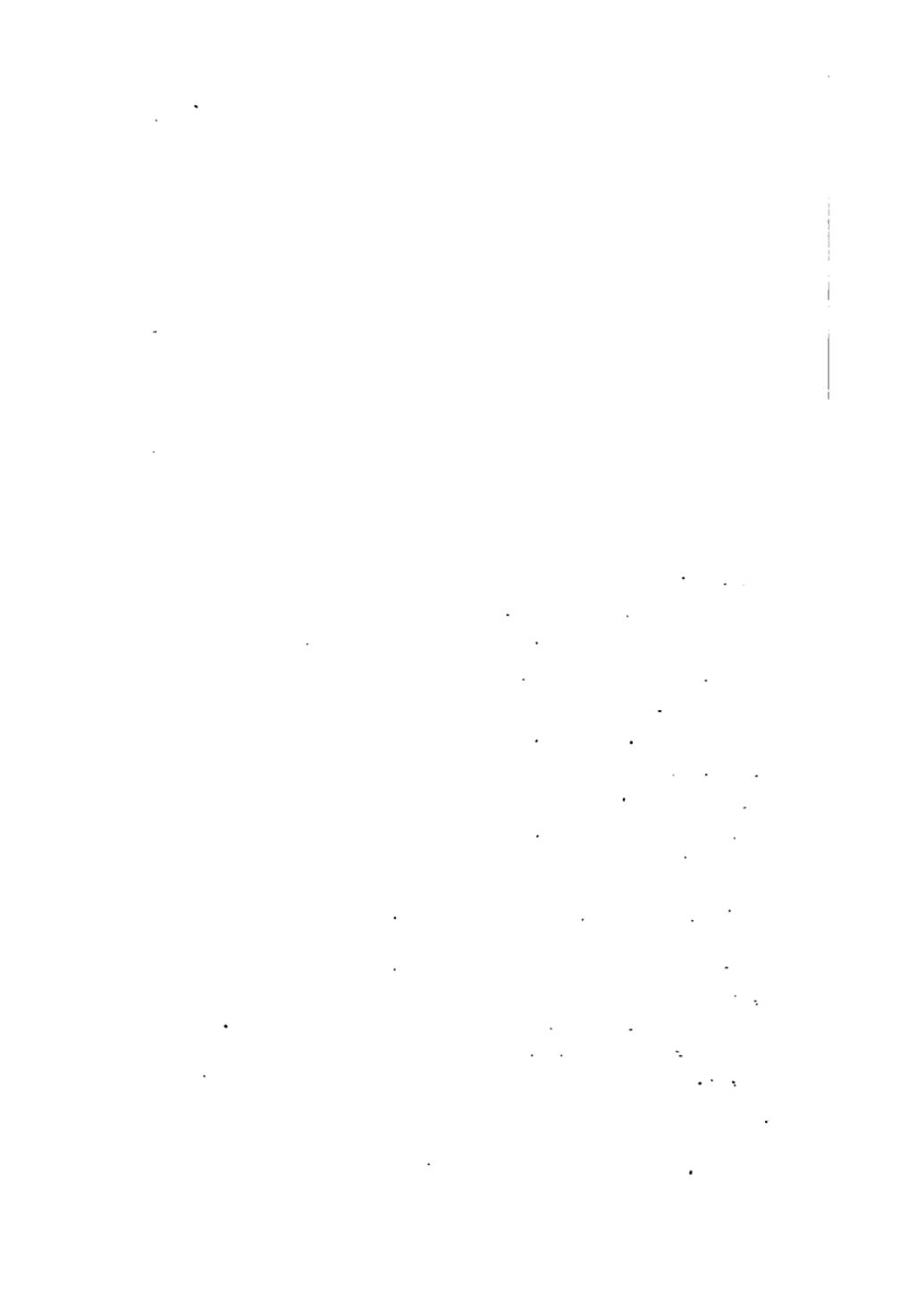
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CALVINISM :

AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS AT ST ANDREWS,

MARCH 17, 1871.

RELIGIOUS men, it is sometimes said, express themselves in all moods and all tenses except the present indicative. They tell us of things that were done in ancient times. They tell us of things which will be hereafter, or which might or would have been under certain conditions. Of the actual outward dispensation under which we live at present, we hear very little. The facts of experience are not sufficiently in harmony with the theories of different religious bodies to allow any sect or set of believers to appeal to them with confidence. The age of miracles is past. The world is supposed to go its own way, undisturbed by providential interferences, waiting for some final account to be taken with it hereafter; while the relations of the Creator with His creatures are confined to special and invisible processes by which individual souls are saved from perdition.

Acknowledgments of this kind are no more than a tacit confession of the inadequacy of our several opinions to explain the phenomena of our lives. Results which are unapparent may be unexistent except in imagination. There is no reason to believe that

the methods by which the laws of physical nature have been discovered should be inapplicable in matters of larger moment, or that the observation of facts by which alone we arrive at scientific conclusions should lead us wrong, or should lead to nothing when we interrogate them on our moral condition. Piety, like wisdom, consists in the discovery of the rules under which we are actually placed, and in faithfully obeying them. Fidelity and insight in the one case are as likely to find their reward as in the other; infidelity and blindness as likely to be answered by failure; and, in other ages, systems of religion have been vigorous and effective precisely to the extent to which they have seen in the existing order of things the hand of a living ruler.

I may say at once that I am about to travel over serious ground. I shall not trespass on theology, though I must go near the frontiers of it. I shall give you the conclusions which I have been led to form upon a series of spiritual phenomena which have appeared successively in different ages of the world—which have exercised the most remarkable influence on the character and history of mankind, and have left their traces nowhere more distinctly than in this Scotland where we now stand.

Every one here present must have become familiar in late years with the change of tone throughout Europe and America on the subject of Calvinism. After being accepted for two centuries in all Protestant countries as the final account of the relations between man and his Maker, it has come to be regarded by liberal thinkers as a system of belief incredible in itself, dishonouring to its object, and as intolerable as it has been itself intolerant. The Catholics whom it overthrew take courage from the philosophers, and assail

it on the same ground. To represent man as sent into the world under a curse, as incurably wicked—wicked by the constitution of his flesh, and wicked by eternal decree—as doomed, unless exempted by special grace which he cannot merit, or by any effort of his own obtain, to live in sin while he remains on earth, and to be eternally miserable when he leaves it—to represent him as born unable to keep the commandments, yet as justly liable to everlasting punishment for breaking them, is alike repugnant to reason and to conscience, and turns existence into a hideous nightmare. To deny the freedom of the will is to make morality impossible. To tell men that they cannot help themselves is to fling them into recklessness and despair. To what purpose the effort to be virtuous when it is an effort which is foredoomed to fail—when those that are saved are saved by no effort of their own, and confess themselves the worst of sinners, even when rescued from the penalties of sin; and those that are lost are lost by an everlasting sentence decreed against them before they were born? How are we to call the Ruler who laid us under this iron code by the name of Wise, or Just, or Merciful, when we ascribe principles of action to Him which in a human father we should call preposterous and monstrous?

The discussion of these strange questions has been pursued at all times with inevitable passion, and the issue uniformly has been a drawn battle. The Arminian has entangled the Calvinist, the Calvinist has entangled the Arminian, in a labyrinth of contradictions. The advocate of free will appeals to conscience and instinct—to an *a priori* sense of what ought in equity to be. The necessitarian falls back upon the experienced reality of facts. It is true, and no argument

can gainsay it, that men are placed in the world unequally favoured, both in inward disposition and outward circumstances. Some children are born with temperaments which make a life of innocence and purity natural and easy to them ; others are born with violent passions, or even with distinct tendencies to evil inherited from their ancestors, and seemingly unconquerable—some are constitutionally brave, others are constitutionally cowards—some are born in religious families, and are carefully educated and watched over ; others draw their first breath in an atmosphere of crime, and cease to inhale it only when they pass into their graves. Only a fourth part of mankind are born Christians. The remainder never hear the name of Christ except as a reproach. The Chinese and the Japanese—we may almost say every weaker race with whom we have come in contact—connect it only with the forced intrusion of strangers whose behaviour among them has served ill to recommend their creed. These are facts which no casuistry can explain away. And if we believe at all that the world is governed by a conscious and intelligent Being, we must believe also, however we can reconcile it with our own ideas, that these anomalies have not arisen by accident, but have been ordered of purpose and design.

No less noticeable is it that the materialistic and the metaphysical philosophers deny as completely as Calvinism what is popularly called Free Will. Every effect has its cause. In every action the will is determined by the motive which at the moment is operating most powerfully upon it. When we do wrong, we are led away by temptation. If we overcome our temptation, we overcome it either because we foresee inconvenient consequences, and the certainty of future pains is stronger than the present pleasure ; or else

because we prefer right to wrong, and our desire for good is greater than our desire for indulgence. It is impossible to conceive a man, when two courses are open to him, choosing that which he least desires. He may say that he can do what he dislikes because it is his duty. Precisely so. His desire to do his duty is a stronger motive with him than the attraction of present pleasure.

Spinoza, from entirely different premises, came to the same conclusion as Mr Mill or Mr Buckle, and can find no better account of the situation of man than in the illustration of St Paul, 'Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour?'

If Arminianism most commends itself to our feelings, Calvinism is nearer to the facts, however harsh and forbidding those facts may seem.

I have no intention, however, of entangling myself or you in these controversies. As little shall I consider whether men have done wisely in attempting a doctrinal solution of problems the conditions of which are so imperfectly known. The moral system of the universe is like a document written in alternate ciphers, which change from line to line. We read a sentence, but at the next our key fails us; we see that there is something written there, but if we guess at it we are guessing in the dark. It seems more faithful, more becoming, in beings such as we are, to rest in the conviction of our own inadequacy, and confine ourselves to those moral rules for our lives and actions on which, so far as they concern ourselves, we are left in no uncertainty at all.

At present, at any rate, we are concerned with an aspect of the matter entirely different. I am going to ask you to consider how it came to pass that if Calvin-

ism is indeed the hard and unreasonable creed which modern enlightenment declares it to be, it has possessed such singular attractions in past times for some of the greatest men that ever lived. And how—being, as we are told, fatal to morality, because it denies free will—the first symptom of its operation, wherever it established itself, was to obliterate the distinction between sins and crimes, and to make the moral law the rule of life for States as well as persons. I shall ask you, again, why, if it be a creed of intellectual servitude, it was able to inspire and sustain the bravest efforts ever made by man to break the yoke of unjust authority. When all else has failed—when patriotism has covered its face and human courage has broken down—when intellect has yielded, as Gibbon says, ‘with a smile or a sigh,’ content to philosophize in the closet, and abroad worship with the vulgar—when emotion and sentiment and tender imaginative piety have become the handmaids of superstition, and have dreamt themselves into forgetfulness that there is any difference between lies and truth—the slavish form of belief called Calvinism, in one or other of its many forms, has borne ever an inflexible front to illusion and mendacity, and has preferred rather to be ground to powder like flint than to bend before violence, or melt under enervating temptation.

It is enough to mention the name of William the Silent, of Luther—for on the points of which I am speaking Luther was one with Calvin—of your own Knox and Andrew Melville and the Regent Murray, of Coligny, of our English Cromwell, of Milton, of John Bunyan. These were men possessed of all the qualities which give nobility and grandeur to human nature—men whose life was as upright as their intellect was commanding and their public aims untainted

with selfishness ; unalterably just where duty required them to be stern, but with the tenderness of a woman in their hearts ; frank, true, cheerful, humorous, as unlike sour fanatics as it is possible to imagine any one, and able in some way to sound the keynote to which every brave and faithful heart in Europe instinctively vibrated.

This is the problem. Grapes do not grow on bramble-bushes. Illustrious natures do not form themselves upon narrow and cruel theories. Spiritual life is full of apparent paradoxes. When St Patrick preached the Gospel on Tarah hill to Leoghaire, the Irish king, the Druids and the wise men of Ireland shook their heads. 'Why,' asked the king, 'does what the cleric preaches seem so dangerous to you?' 'Because,' was the remarkable answer, 'because he preaches repentance, and the law of repentance is such that a man shall say, "I may commit a thousand crimes, and if I repent I shall be forgiven, and it will be no worse with me : therefore I will continue to sin." ' The Druids argued logically, but they drew a false inference notwithstanding. The practical effect of a belief is the real test of its soundness. Where we find a heroic life appearing as the uniform fruit of a particular mode of opinion, it is childish to argue in the face of fact that the result ought to have been different.

The question which I have proposed, however, admits of a reasonable answer. I must ask you only to accompany me on a somewhat wide circuit in search of it.

There seems, in the first place, to lie in all men, in proportion to the strength of their understanding, a conviction that there is in all human things a real order and purpose, notwithstanding the chaos in which

at times they seem to be involved. Suffering scattered blindly without remedial purpose or retributive propriety—good and evil distributed with the most absolute disregard of moral merit or demerit—enormous crimes perpetrated with impunity, or vengeance when it comes falling not on the guilty, but the innocent—

Desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimmed in jollity—

these phenomena present, generation after generation, the same perplexing and even maddening features ; and without an illogical but none the less a positive certainty that things are not as they seem—that, in spite of appearance, there is justice at the heart of them, and that, in the working out of the vast drama, justice will assert somehow and somewhere its sovereign right and power, the better sort of persons would find existence altogether unendurable. This is what the Greeks meant by the *'Aváγκη* or destiny, which at the bottom is no other than moral Providence. Prometheus chained on the rock is the counterpart of Job on his dunghill. Torn with unrelaxing agony, the vulture with beak and talons rending at his heart, the Titan still defies the tyrant at whose command he suffers, and, strong in conscious innocence, appeals to the eternal *Moῖρα* which will do him right in the end. The Olympian gods were cruel, jealous, capricious, malignant ; but beyond and above the Olympian gods lay the silent, brooding, everlasting fate of which victim and tyrant were alike the instruments, and which at last, far off, after ages of misery it might be, but still before all was over, would vindicate the sovereignty of justice. Full as it may be of contradictions and perplexities, this obscure belief lies at the very

core of our spiritual nature, and it is called fate or it is called predestination according as it is regarded pantheistically as a necessary condition of the universe, or as the decree of a self-conscious being.

Intimately connected with this belief, and perhaps the fact of which it is the inadequate expression, is the existence in nature of omnipresent organic laws, penetrating the material world, penetrating the moral world of human life and society, which insist on being obeyed in all that we do and handle—which we cannot alter, cannot modify—which will go with us, and assist and befriend us, if we recognize and comply with them—which inexorably make themselves felt in failure and disaster if we neglect or attempt to thwart them. Search where we will among created things, far as the microscope will allow the eye to pierce, we find organization everywhere. Large forms resolve themselves into parts, but these parts are but organized out of other parts, down so far as we can see into infinity. When the plant meets with the conditions which agree with it, it thrives; under unhealthy conditions it is poisoned and disintegrates. It is the same precisely with each one of ourselves, whether as individuals or as aggregated into associations, into families, into nations, into institutions. The remotest fibre of human action, from the policy of empires to the most insignificant trifle over which we waste an idle hour or moment, either moves in harmony with the true law of our being, or is else at discord with it. A king or a parliament enacts a law, and we imagine we are creating some new regulation, to encounter unprecedented circumstances. The law itself which applied to these circumstances was enacted from eternity. It has its existence independent of us, and will enforce itself either to reward

or punish, as the attitude which we assume towards it is wise or unwise. Our human laws are but the copies, more or less imperfect, of the eternal laws so far as we can read them, and either succeed and promote our welfare, or fail and bring confusion and disaster, according as the legislator's insight has detected the true principle, or has been distorted by ignorance or selfishness.

And these laws are absolute, inflexible, irreversible, the steady friends of the wise and good, the eternal enemies of the blockhead and the knave. No Pope can dispense with a statute enrolled in the Chancery of Heaven, or popular vote repeal it. The discipline is a stern one, and many a wild endeavour men have made to obtain less hard conditions, or imagine them other than they are. They have conceived the rule of the Almighty to be like the rule of one of themselves. They have fancied that they could bribe or appease Him—tempt Him by penance or pious offering to suspend or turn aside His displeasure. They are asking that His own eternal nature shall become other than it is. One thing only they can do. They for themselves, by changing their own courses, can make the law which they have broken thenceforward their friend. Their dispositions and nature will revive and become healthy again when they are no longer in opposition to the will of their Maker. This is the natural action of what we call repentance. But the penalties of the wrongs of the past remain unreprieved. As men have sown they must still reap. The profligate who has ruined his health or fortune may learn before he dies that he has lived as a fool, and may recover something of his peace of mind as he recovers his understanding; but no miracle takes away his paralysis, or gives back to his children the

bread of which he has robbed them. He may himself be pardoned, but the consequences of his acts remain.

Once more : and it is the most awful feature of our condition. The laws of nature are general, and are no respecters of persons. There has been and there still is a clinging impression that the sufferings of men are the results of their own particular misdeeds, and that no one is or can be punished for the faults of others. I shall not dispute about the word 'punishment.' 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes,' said the Jewish proverb, 'and the children's teeth are set on edge.' So said Jewish experience, and Ezekiel answered that these words should no longer be used among them. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' Yes, there is a promise that the soul shall be saved, there is no such promise for the body. Every man is the architect of his own character, and if to the extent of his opportunities he has lived purely, nobly, and uprightly, the misfortunes which may fall on him through the crimes or errors of other men cannot injure the immortal part of him. But it is no less true that we are made dependent one upon another to a degree which can hardly be exaggerated. The winds and waves are on the side of the best navigator—the seaman who best understands them. Place a fool at the helm, and crew and passengers will perish, be they ever so innocent. The Tower of Siloam fell, not for any sins of the eighteen who were crushed by it, but through bad mortar probably, the rotting of a beam, or the uneven settling of the foundations. The persons who should have suffered, according to our notion of distributive justice, were the ignorant architects or masons who had done their work amiss. But the guilty had perhaps long been turned to dust. And the law of gravity brought

the tower down at its own time, indifferent to the persons who might be under it.

Now the feature which distinguishes man from other animals is that he is able to observe and discover these laws which are of such mighty moment to him, and direct his conduct in conformity with them. The more subtle may be revealed only by complicated experience. The plainer and more obvious—among those especially which are called moral—have been apprehended among the higher races easily and readily. I shall not ask how the knowledge of them has been obtained, whether by external revelation, or by natural insight, or by some other influence working through human faculties. The fact is all that we are concerned with, that from the earliest times of which we have historical knowledge there have always been men who have recognized the distinction between the nobler and baser parts of their being. They have perceived that if they would be men and not beasts, they must control their animal passions, prefer truth to falsehood, courage to cowardice, justice to violence, and compassion to cruelty. These are the elementary principles of morality, on the recognition of which the welfare and improvement of mankind depend, and human history has been little more than a record of the struggle which began at the beginning and will continue to the end between the few who have had ability to see into the truth and loyalty to obey it, and the multitude who by evasion or rebellion have hoped to thrive in spite of it.

Thus we see that in the better sort of men there are two elementary convictions ; that there is over all things an unsleeping, inflexible, all-ordering, just power, and that this power governs the world by laws which can be seen in their effects, and on the obedience to which, and on nothing else, human welfare depends.

And now I will suppose some one whose tendencies are naturally healthy, though as yet no special occasion shall have roused him to serious thought, growing up in a civilized community, where, as usually happens, a compromise has been struck between vice and virtue, where a certain difference between right and wrong is recognized decently on the surface, while below it one-half of the people are rushing steadily after the thing called pleasure, and the other half labouring in drudgery to provide the means of it for the idle.

Of practical justice in such a community there will be exceedingly little, but as society cannot go along at all without paying morality some outward homage, there will of course be an established religion—an Olympus, a Valhalla, or some system of theogony or theology, with temples, priests, liturgies, public confessions in one form or another of the dependence of the things we see upon what is not seen, with certain ideas of duty and penalties imposed for neglect of it. These there will be, and also, as obedience is disagreeable and requires abstinence from various indulgences, there will be contrivances by which the indulgences can be secured, and no harm come of it. By the side of the moral law there grows up a law of ceremonial observance, to which is attached a notion of superior sanctity and especial obligation. Morality, though not at first disowned, is slighted as comparatively trivial. Duty in the high sense comes to mean religious duty, that is to say, the attentive observance of certain forms and ceremonies, and these forms and ceremonies come into collision little or not at all with ordinary life, and ultimately have a tendency to resolve themselves into payments of money.

Thus rises what is called idolatry. I do not mean by idolatry the mere worship of manufactured images.

I mean the separation between practical obligation, and new moons and sabbaths, outward acts of devotion, or formulas of particular opinions. It is a state of things perpetually recurring ; for there is nothing, if it would only act, more agreeable to all parties concerned. Priests find their office magnified and their consequence increased. Laymen can be in favour with God and man, so priests tell them, while their enjoyments or occupations are in no way interfered with. The mischief is that the laws of nature remain meanwhile unsuspended ; and all the functions of society become poisoned through neglect of them. Religion, which ought to have been a restraint, becomes a fresh instrument of evil—to the imaginative and the weak a contemptible superstition, to the educated a mockery, to knaves and hypocrites a cloak of iniquity, to all alike—to those who suffer and those who seem to profit by it—a lie so palpable as to be worse than atheism itself.

There comes a time when all this has to end. The over-indulgence of the few is the over-penury of the many. Injustice begets misery, and misery resentment. Something happens perhaps—some unusual oppression, or some act of religious mendacity especially glaring. Such a person as I am supposing asks himself, 'What is the meaning of these things ?' His eyes are opened. Gradually he discovers that he is living surrounded with falsehood, drinking lies like water, his conscience polluted, his intellect degraded by the abominations which envelope his existence. At first perhaps he will feel most keenly for himself. He will not suppose that he can set to rights a world that is out of joint, but he will himself relinquish his share in what he detests and despises. He withdraws into himself. If what others are doing and saying is

obviously wrong, then he has to ask himself what is right, and what is the true purpose of his existence. Light breaks more clearly on him. He becomes conscious of impulses towards something purer and higher than he has yet experienced or even imagined. Whence these impulses come he cannot tell. He is too keenly aware of the selfish and cowardly thoughts which rise up to mar and thwart his nobler aspirations, to believe that they can possibly be his own. If he conquers his baser nature he feels that he is conquering himself. The conqueror and the conquered cannot be the same ; and he therefore concludes, not in vanity, but in profound humiliation and self-abasement, that the infinite grace of God and nothing else is rescuing him from destruction. He is converted, as the theologians say. He sets his face upon another road from that which he has hitherto travelled, and to which he can never return. It has been no merit of his own. His disposition will rather be to exaggerate his own worthlessness, that he may exalt the more what has been done for him, and he resolves thenceforward to enlist himself as a soldier on the side of truth and right, and to have no wishes, no desires, no opinions but what the service of his Master imposes. Like a soldier he abandons his freedom, desiring only like a soldier to act and speak no longer as of himself, but as commissioned from some supreme authority. In such a condition a man becomes magnetic. There are epidemics of nobleness as well as epidemics of disease ; and he infects others with his own enthusiasm. Even in the most corrupt ages there are always more persons than we suppose who in their hearts rebel against the prevailing fashions ; one takes courage from another, one supports another ; communities form themselves with higher principles of action and purer intellectual beliefs.

As their numbers multiply they catch fire with a common idea and a common indignation, and ultimately burst out into open war with the lies and iniquities that surround them.

I have been describing a natural process which has repeated itself many times in human history, and, unless the old opinion that we are more than animated clay, and that our nature has nobler affinities, dies away into a dream, will repeat itself at recurring intervals, so long as our race survives upon the planet.

I have told you generally what I conceive to be our real position, and the administration under which we live; and I have indicated how naturally the conviction of the truth would tend to express itself in the moral formulas of Calvinism. I will now run briefly over the most remarkable of the great historical movements to which I have alluded; and you will see, in the striking recurrence of the same peculiar mode of thought and action, an evidence that, if not completely accurate, it must possess some near and close affinity with the real fact. I will take first the example with which we are all most familiar—that of the chosen people. I must again remind you that I am not talking of theology. I say nothing of what is called technically revelation. I am treating these matters as phenomena of human experience, the lessons of which would be identically the same if no revelation existed.

The discovery of the key to the hieroglyphics, the excavations in the tombs, the investigations carried on by a series of careful inquirers, from Belzoni to Lepsius, into the antiquities of the Valley of the Nile, interpreting and in turn interpreted by Manetho and Herodotus, have thrown a light in many respects singularly clear upon the condition of the first country which, so far as history can tell, succeeded in achieving a state of high

civilization. From a period the remoteness of which it is unsafe to conjecture there had been established in Egypt an elaborate and splendid empire, which, though it had not escaped revolutions, had suffered none which had caused organic changes there. It had strength, wealth, power, coherence, a vigorous monarchy, dominant and exclusive castes of nobles and priests, and a proletariat of slaves. Its cities, temples, and monuments are still, in their ruin, the admiration of engineers, and the despair of architects. Original intellectual conceptions inspired its public buildings. Saved by situation, like China, from the intrusion of barbarians, it developed at leisure its own ideas, undisturbed from without; and when it becomes historically visible to us it was in the zenith of its glory. The habits of the higher classes were elaborately luxurious, and the vanity and the self-indulgence of the few were made possible—as it is and always must be where vanity and self-indulgence exist—by the oppression and misery of the millions. You can see on the sides of the tombs—for their pride and their pomp followed them even in their graves—the effeminate patrician of the court of the Pharaohs reclining in his gilded gondola, the attendant eunuch waiting upon him with the goblet or plate of fruit, the bevies of languishing damsels fluttering round him in their transparent draperies. Shakespeare's Cleopatra might have sat for the portrait of the Potiphar's wife who tried the virtue of the son of Jacob:

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them. . . .
For her own person,
It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—

O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
 The fancy out-work nature : on each side her
 Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
 With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem
 To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
 And what they did, undid.

By the side of all this there was a no less elaborate religion—an ecclesiastical hierarchy—powerful as the sacerdotalism of Mediæval Europe, with a creed in the middle of it which was a complicated idolatry of the physical forces.

There are at bottom but two possible religions—that which rises in the moral nature of man, and which takes shape in moral commandments, and that which grows out of the observation of the material energies which operate in the external universe. The sun at all times has been the central object of this material reverence. The sun was the parent of light ; the sun was the lord of the sky and the lord of the seasons ; at the sun's bidding the earth brought forth her harvests and ripened them to maturity. The sun, too, was beneficent to the good and to the evil, and, like the laws of political economy, drew no harsh distinctions between one person and another—demanding only that certain work should be done, and smiling equally on the crops of the slave-driver and the garden of the innocent peasant. The moon, when the sun sunk to his night's rest, reigned as his vicegerent, the queen of the revolving heavens, and in her waxing and waning and singular movement among the stars was the perpetual occasion of admiring and adoring curiosity. Nature in all her forms was wonderful ; Nature in her beneficent forms was to be loved and worshipped ; and being, as Nature is, indifferent to morality, bestowing prosperity on principles which make no demands on chastity or equity, she is, in one form or other, the divinity at

whose shrine in all ages the favoured sections of society have always gladly paid their homage. Where Nature is sovereign, there is no need of austerity and self-denial. The object of life is the pursuit of wealth and the pleasures which wealth can purchase ; and the rules for our practical guidance are the laws, as the economists say, by which wealth can be acquired.

It is an excellent creed for those who have the happiness to profit by it, and will have its followers to the end of time. In these later ages it connects itself with the natural sciences, progress of the intellect, specious shadows of all kinds which will not interfere with its supreme management of political arrangements. In Egypt, where knowledge was in its rudiments, every natural force, the minutest plant or animal, which influenced human fortunes for good or evil, came in for a niche in the shrine of the temples of the sun and moon. Snakes and crocodiles, dogs, cats, cranes, and beetles were propitiated by sacrifices, by laboured ceremonials of laudation ; nothing living was too mean to find a place in the omnivorous devotionalism of the Egyptian clergy. We, in these days, proud as we may be of our intellectual advances, need not ridicule popular credulity. Even here in Scotland, not so long ago, wretched old women were supposed to run about the country in the shape of hares. At this very hour the ablest of living natural philosophers is looking gravely to the courtships of moths and butterflies to solve the problem of the origin of man, and prove his descent from an African baboon.

There was, however, in ancient Egypt another article of faith besides nature-worship of transcendent moment—a belief which had probably descended from earlier and purer ages, and had then originated in the

minds of sincere and earnest men—as a solution of the real problem of humanity. The inscriptions and paintings in the tombs near Thebes make it perfectly clear that the Egyptians looked forward to a future state—to the judgment-bar of Osiris, where they would each one day stand to give account for their actions. They believed as clearly as we do, and with a conviction of a very similar kind, that those who had done good would go to everlasting life, and those who had done evil into eternal perdition.

Such a belief, if coupled with an accurate perception of what good and evil mean—with a distinct certainty that men will be tried by the moral law, before a perfectly just judge, and that no subterfuges will avail—cannot but exercise a most profound and most tremendous influence upon human conduct. And yet our own experience, if nothing else, proves that this belief, when moulded into traditional and conventional shapes, may lose its practical power; nay, without ceasing to be professed, and even sincerely held, may become more mischievous than salutary. And this is owing to the fatal distinction of which I spoke just now, which seems to have an irresistible tendency to shape itself, in civilized societies, between religious and moral duties. With the help of this distinction it becomes possible for a man, as long as he avoids gross sins, to neglect every one of his positive obligations—to be careless, selfish, unscrupulous, indifferent to everything but his own pleasures—and to imagine all the time that his condition is perfectly satisfactory, and that he can look forward to what is before him without the slightest uneasiness. All accounts represent the Egyptians as an eminently religious people. No profanity was tolerated there, no scepticism, no insolent disobedience to the established priesthood.

If a doubt ever crossed the mind of some licentious philosopher as to the entire sacredness of the stainless Apis, if ever a question forced itself on him whether the Lord of heaven and earth could really be incarnated in the stupidest of created beasts, he kept his counsels to himself, if he was not shocked at his own impiety. The priests, who professed supernatural powers—the priests, who were in communication with the gods themselves—they possessed the keys of the sacred mysteries, and what was Philosophy that it should lift its voice against them? The word of the priest—nine parts a charlatan, and one part, perhaps, himself imposed on—was absolute. He knew the counsels of Osiris, he knew that the question which would be asked at the dread tribunal was not whether a man had been just and true and merciful, but whether he had believed what he was told to believe, and had duly paid the fees to the temple. And so the world went its way, controlled by no dread of retribution; and on the tomb-frescoes you can see legions of slaves under the lash dragging from the quarries the blocks of granite which were to form the eternal monuments of the Pharaohs' tyranny; and you read in the earliest authentic history that when there was a fear that the slave-races should multiply so fast as to be dangerous their babies were flung to the crocodiles.

One of these slave-races rose at last in revolt. Noticeably it did not rise against oppression as such, or directly in consequence of oppression. We hear of no massacre of slave-drivers, no burning of towns or villages, none of the usual accompaniments of peasant insurrections. If Egypt was plagued, it was not by mutinous mobs or incendiaries. Half a million men simply rose up and declared that they could en-

dure no longer the mendacity, the hypocrisy, the vile and incredible rubbish which was offered to them in the sacred name of religion. 'Let us go,' they said, 'into the wilderness, go out of these soft water-meadows and corn-fields, forsake our leeks and our flesh-pots, and take in exchange a life of hardship and wandering, that we may worship the God of our fathers.' Their leader had been trained in the wisdom of the Egyptians, and among the rocks of Sinai had learnt that it was wind and vanity. The half-obsured traditions of his ancestors awoke to life again, and were rekindled by him in his people. They would bear with lies no longer. They shook the dust of Egypt from their feet, and the pride and falsehood of it from their souls, and they withdrew, with all belonging to them, into the Arabian desert, that they might no longer serve cats and dogs and bulls and beetles, but the Eternal Spirit who had been pleased to make his existence known to them. They sung no paens of liberty. They were delivered from the house of bondage, but it was the bondage of mendacity, and they left it only to assume another service. The Eternal had taken pity on them. In revealing his true nature to them, he had taken them for his children. They were not their own, but his, and they laid their lives under commandments which were as close a copy as, with the knowledge which they possessed, they could make, to the moral laws of the Maker of the universe. In essentials the Book of the Law was a covenant of practical justice. Rewards and punishments were alike immediate, both to each separate person and to the collective nation. Retribution in a life to come was dropped out of sight, not denied, but not insisted on. The belief in it had been corrupted to evil, and rather enervated than en-

couraged the efforts after present equity. Every man was to reap as he had sown—here, in the immediate world—to live under his own vine and fig-tree, and thrive or suffer according to his actual deserts. Religion was not a thing of past or future, an account of things that had been, or of things which one day would be again. God was the actual living ruler of real every-day life; nature-worship was swept away, and in the warmth and passion of conviction they became, as I said, the soldiers of a purer creed. In Palestine, where they found idolatry in a form yet fouler and more cruel than what they had left behind them, they trampled it out as if in inspired abomination of a system of which the fruits were so detestable. They were not perfect—very far from perfect. An army at best is made of mixed materials, and war, of all ways of making wrong into right, is the harshest; but they were directed by a noble purpose, and they have left a mark never to be effaced in the history of the human race.

The fire died away. 'The Israelites,' we are told, 'mingled among the heathen and learned their works.' They ceased to be missionaries. They hardly and fitfully preserved the records of the meaning of their own exodus. Eight hundred years went by and the flame rekindled in another country. Cities more splendid even than the hundred-gated Thebes itself had risen on the banks of the Euphrates. Grand military empires had been founded on war and conquest. Peace had followed when no enemies were left to conquer; and with peace had come philosophy, science, agricultural enterprise, magnificent engineering works for the draining and irrigation of the Mesopotamian plains. Temples and palaces towered into the sky. The pomp and luxury of Asia rivalled, and

even surpassed, the glories of Egypt ; and by the side of it a second nature-worship, which, if less elaborately absurd, was more deeply detestable. The foulest vices were consecrated to the service of the gods, and the holiest ceremonies were inoculated with impurity and sensuality.

The seventh century before the Christian era was distinguished over the whole East by extraordinary religious revolutions. With the most remarkable of these, that which bears the name of Buddha, I am not here concerned. Buddhism has been the creed for more than two thousand years of half the human race, but it left unaffected our own western world, and therefore I here pass it by.

Simultaneously with Buddha there appeared another teacher, Zerdusht, or, as the Greeks called him, Zoroaster, among the hardy tribes of the Persian mountains. He taught a creed which, like that of the Israelites, was essentially moral and extremely simple. Nature-worship, as I said, knew nothing of morality. When the objects of natural idolatry became personified, and physical phenomena were metamorphosed into allegorical mythology, the indifference to morality, which was obvious in nature, became ascribed as a matter of course to gods which were but nature in a personal disguise. Zoroaster, like Moses, saw behind the physical forces into the deeper laws of right and wrong. He supposed himself to discover two antagonist powers, contending in the heart of man as well as in the outward universe—a spirit of light and a spirit of darkness, a spirit of truth and a spirit of falsehood, a spirit life-giving and beautiful, a spirit poisonous and deadly. To one or other of these powers man was necessarily in servitude. As the follower of Ormuzd, he became enrolled in the celestial armies,

whose business was to fight against sin and misery, against wrong-doing and impurity, against injustice and lies and baseness of all sorts and kinds; and every one with a soul in him to prefer good to evil was summoned to the holy wars, which would end at last after ages in the final overthrow of Ahriman.

The Persians caught rapidly Zoroaster's spirit. Uncorrupted by luxury, they responded eagerly to a voice which they recognized as speaking truth to them. They have been called the Puritans of the Old World. Never any people, it is said, hated idolatry as they hated it, and for the simple reason that they hated lies. A Persian lad, Herodotus tells us, was educated in three especial accomplishments. He was taught to ride, to shoot, and to speak the truth—that is to say, he was brought up to be brave, active, valiant, and upright. When a man speaks the truth, you may count pretty surely that he possesses most other virtues. Half the vices in the world rise out of cowardice, and one who is afraid of lying is usually afraid of nothing else. Speech is an article of trade in which we are all dealers, and the one beyond all others where we are most bound to provide honest wares :

*Ἐχθρός μοι κάκεινος δμῶς Ἀΐδησ πυλαῖσιν
οὗς θ' ἔτερον μεν κευθή ἐνι φρέσιν ἀλλο δὲ εἰπῆ.*

This seems to have been the Persian temperament, and in virtue of it they were chosen as the instruments—clearly recognized as such by the Prophet Isaiah for one—which were to sweep the earth clean of abominations, which had grown to an intolerable height. Bel bowed down, and Nebo had to stoop before them. Babylon, the lady of kingdoms, was laid in the dust, and 'her star-gazers and her astrologers and her monthly prognosticators' could not save her with all their skill. They and she were borne away together.

Egypt's turn followed. Retribution had been long delayed, but her cup ran over at last. The palm-groves were flung into the river, the temples polluted, the idols mutilated. The precious Apis, for all its godhood, was led with a halter before the Persian king, and stabbed in the sight of the world by Persian steel.

'Profane!' exclaimed the priests, as pious persons, on like occasions, have exclaimed a thousand times: 'these Puritans have no reverence for holy things.' Rather it is because they do reverence things which deserve reverence that they loathe and abhor the counterfeit. What does an ascertained imposture deserve but to be denied, exposed, insulted, trampled underfoot, danced upon, if nothing less will serve, till the very geese take courage and venture to hiss derision? Are we to wreath aureoles round the brows of phantasms lest we shock the sensibilities of the idiots who have believed them to be divine? Was the Prophet Isaiah so tender in his way of treating such matters?

Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? He heweth him down cedars. He taketh the cypress and the oak from the trees of the forest. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh. He roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, for the glory of His majesty when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and the bats.

Again events glide on. Persia runs the usual course. Virtue and truth produced strength, strength dominion, dominion riches, riches luxury, and luxury weakness and collapse—fatal sequence repeated so often, yet to so little purpose. The hardy warrior of the mountains degenerated into a vulgar sybarite. His manliness

became effeminacy ; his piety a ritual of priests ; himself a liar, a coward, and a slave. The Greeks conquered the Persians, copied their manners, and fell in turn before the Romans. We count little more than 500 years from the fall of Babylon, and the entire known world was lying at the feet of a great military despotism. Coming originally themselves from the East, the classic nations had brought with them also the primæval nature-worship of Asia. The Greek imagination had woven the Eastern metaphors into a singular mythology, in which the gods were represented as beings possessing in a splendid degree physical beauty, physical strength, with the kind of awfulness which belonged to their origin ; the fitful, wanton, changeable, yet also terrible powers of the elemental world. Translated into the language of humanity, the actions and adventures thus ascribed to the gods became in process of time impossible to be believed. Intellect expanded ; moral sense grew more vigorous, and with it the conviction that if the national traditions were true man must be more just than his Maker. In Æschylus and Sophocles, in Pindar and Plato, you see conscience asserting its sovereignty over the most sacred beliefs—instinctive reverence and piety struggling sometimes to express themselves under the names and forms of the past, sometimes bursting out uncontrollably into indignant abhorrence :

Ἐμοὶ δὲ πόρα γαστρίμαργον
Μακάρων τιν' εἰτεῖν.
Ἄφισταμαι . . .
καὶ τούς τι καὶ βροτῶν φρένας
ὅπερ τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον
δεδαιδάλμενος ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις
ἔξαπατῶντι μύθοι.
Χάρισθ' ὅπερ ἀπαντά τεύχει
τὰ μειλιχά θνατοῖς
ἐπιφέροισα τιμὰν
καὶ ἀπιστον ἐμῆσατο πίστον
ἔμμεναι τὸ πόλλακις.

To me 'twere strange indeed
To charge the blessed gods with greed,
I dare not do it. . . .

Myths too oft,
With quaintly coloured lies enwrought,
To stray from truth have mortals brought.
And Art, which round all things below
A charm of loveliness can throw,
Has robed the false in honour's hue,
And made the incredible seem true.

'All religions,' says Gibbon, 'are to the vulgar equally true, to the philosopher equally false, and to the statesman equally useful:' thus scornfully summing up the theory of the matter which he found to be held by the politicians of the age which he was describing, and perhaps of his own. Religion, as a moral force, died away with the establishment of the Roman Empire, and with it died probity, patriotism, and human dignity, and all that men had learnt in nobler ages to honour and to value as good. Order reigned unbroken under the control of the legions. Industry flourished, and natural science, and most of the elements of what we now call civilization. Ships covered the seas. Huge towns adorned the Imperial provinces. The manners of men became more artificial, and in a certain sense more humane. Religion was a State establishment—a decent acknowledgment of a power or powers which, if they existed at all, amused themselves in the depths of space, careless, so their deity was not denied, of the woe or weal of humanity: the living fact, supreme in Church and State, being the wearer of the purple, who, as the practical realization of authority, assumed the name as well as the substance. The one god immediately known to man was thenceforth the *Divus Cæsar*, whose throne in the sky was waiting empty for him till his earthly exile was ended, and it pleased him to join or rejoin his kindred divinities.

It was the era of atheism—atheism such as this earth never witnessed before or since. You who have read Tacitus know the practical fruits of it, as they appeared at the heart of the system in the second Babylon, the proud city of the seven hills. You will remember how, for the crime of a single slave, the entire household of a Roman patrician, four hundred innocent human beings, were led in chains across the Forum and murdered by what was called law. You will remember the exquisite Nero, who, in his love of art, to throw himself more fully into the genius of Greek tragedy, committed incest with his mother that he might be a second Oedipus, and assassinated her that he might realize the sensations of Orestes. You will recall one scene which Tacitus describes, not as exceptional or standing alone, but merely, he says, ‘quas ut exemplum referam ne sæpius eadem prodigentia narranda sit’—the hymeneal night-banquet on Agrippa’s lake, graced by the presence of the wives and daughters of the Roman senators, where amidst blazing fireworks and music and cloth-of-gold pavilions and naked prostitutes, the majesty of the Cæsars celebrated his nuptials with a boy.

There, I conceive, was the visible product of material civilization, where there was no fear of God in the middle of it—the final outcome of wealth and prosperity and art and culture, raised aloft as a sign for all ages to look upon.

But it is not to this, nor to the fire of hell which in due time burst out to consume it, that I desire now to draw your attention. I have to point out to you two purifying movements which were at work in the midst of the pollution, one of which came to nothing and survives only in books, the second a force which was to mould for ages the future history of man. Both

require our notice, for both singularly contained the particular feature which is called the reproach of Calvinism.

The blackest night is never utterly dark. When mankind seem most abandoned there are always a seven thousand somewhere who have not bowed the knee to the fashionable opinions of the hour. Among the great Roman families a certain number remained republican in feeling and republican in habit. The State religion was as incredible to them as to every one else. They could not persuade themselves that they could discover the will of Heaven in the colour of a calf's liver or in the appetite of the sacred chickens; but they had retained the moral instincts of their citizen ancestors. They knew nothing of God or the gods, but they had something in themselves which made sensuality nauseating instead of pleasant to them. They had an austere sense of the meaning of the word 'duty.' They could distinguish and reverence the nobler possibilities of their nature. They disdained what was base and effeminate, and, though religion failed them, they constructed out of philosophy a rule which would serve to live by. Stoicism is a not unnatural refuge of thoughtful men in confused and sceptical ages. It adheres rigidly to morality. It offers no easy Epicurean explanation of the origin of man, which resolves him into an organization of particles, and dismisses him again into nothingness. It recognizes only that men who are the slaves of their passions are miserable and impotent, and insists that personal inclinations shall be subordinated to conscience. It prescribes plainness of life, that the number of our necessities may be as few as possible; and in placing the business of life in intellectual and moral action it destroys the temptation to

sensual gratifications. It teaches a contempt of death so complete that it can be encountered without a flutter of the pulse ; and while it raises men above the suffering which makes others miserable, generates a proud submissiveness to sorrow which noblest natures feel most keenly, by representing this huge scene and the shows which it presents as the work of some unknown but irresistible force, against which it is vain to struggle and childish to repine.

As with Calvinism, a theoretic belief in an overruling will or destiny was not only compatible with but seemed naturally to issue in the control of the animal appetites. The Stoic did not argue that, 'as fate governs all things, I can do no wrong, and therefore I will take my pleasure :' but rather, 'The moral law within me is the noblest part of my being and compels me to submit to it.' He did not withdraw from the world like the Christian anchorite. He remained at his post in the senate, the Forum, or the army. A Stoic in Marcus Aurelius gave a passing dignity to the dishonoured purple. In Tacitus, Stoicism has left an external evidence how grand a creature man may be, though unassisted by conscious dependence on external spiritual help, through steady disdain of what is base, steady reverence for all that deserves to be revered, and inflexible integrity in word and deed.

But Stoicism could under no circumstances be a regenerating power in the general world. It was a position only tenable to the educated ; it was without hope and without enthusiasm. From a contempt of the objects which mankind most desired, the step was short and inevitable to contempt of mankind themselves. Wrapped in mournful self-dependence, the Stoic could face calmly for himself whatever lot the fates might send :

*Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.*

But, natural as such a creed might be in a Roman noble under the Empire, natural perhaps as it may always be in corrupted ages and amidst disorganized beliefs, the very sternness of Stoicism was repellent. It carried no consolation to the hearts of the suffering millions, who were in no danger of being led away by luxury, because their whole lives were passed in poverty and wretchedness. It was individual, not missionary. The Stoic declared no active war against corruption. He stood alone, protesting scornfully in silent example against evils which he was without power to cure. Like Cæsar, he folded himself in his mantle. The world might do its worst. He would keep his own soul unstained.

Place beside the Stoics their contemporaries the Galilean fishermen and the tent-maker of Tarsus. I am not about to sketch in a few paragraphs the rise of Christianity. I mean only to point to the principles on which the small knot of men gathered themselves together who were about to lay the foundations of a vast spiritual revolution. The guilt and wretchedness in which the world was steeped St Paul felt as keenly as Tacitus. Like Tacitus, too, he believed that the wild and miserable scene which he beheld was no result of accident, but had been ordained so to be, and was the direct expression of an all-mastering Power. But he saw also that this Power was no blind necessity or iron chain of connected cause and effect, but a perfectly just, perfectly wise being, who governed all things by the everlasting immutable laws of his own nature; that when these laws were resisted or forgotten they wrought ruin and confusion and slavery to death and sin; that when they were recognized and obeyed the curse would

be taken away, and freedom and manliness come back again. Whence the disobedience had first risen was a problem which St Paul solved in a manner not all unlike the Persians. There was a rebellious spirit in the universe, penetrating into men's hearts, and prompting them to disloyalty and revolt. It removed the question a step further back without answering it, but the fact was plain as the sunlight. Men had neglected the laws of their Maker. In neglecting them they had brought universal ruin, not on themselves only, but on all society, and if the world was to be saved from destruction they must be persuaded or forced back into their allegiance. The law itself had been once more revealed on the mountains of Palestine, and in the person and example of one who had lived and died to make it known ; and those who had heard and known Him, being possessed with His spirit, felt themselves commissioned as a missionary legion to publish the truth to mankind. They were not, like the Israelites or the Persians, to fight with the sword—not even in their own defence. The sword can take life, but not give it ; and the command to the Apostles was to sow the invisible seed in the hotbed of corruption, and feed and foster it, and water it, with the blood, not of others, but themselves. Their own wills, ambitions, hopes, desires, emotions, were swallowed up in the will to which they had surrendered themselves. They were soldiers. It was St Paul's metaphor, and no other is so appropriate. They claimed no merit through their calling ; they were too conscious of their own sins to indulge in the poisonous reflection that they were not as other men. They were summoned out on their allegiance, and armed with the spiritual strength which belongs to the consciousness of a just cause. If they indulged any personal hope, it was only that their

weaknesses would not be remembered against them—that, having been chosen for a work in which the victory was assured, they would be made themselves worthy of their calling, and, though they might slide, would not be allowed to fall. Many mysteries remained unsolved. Man was as clay in the potter's hand—one vessel was made to honour and another to dishonour. Why, who could tell? This only they knew, that they must themselves do no dishonour to the spirit that was in them—gain others, gain all who would join them for their common purpose, and fight with all their souls against ignorance and sin.

The fishermen of Gennesaret planted Christianity, and many a winter and many a summer have since rolled over it. More than once it has shed its leaves and seemed to be dying, and when the buds burst again the colour of the foliage was changed. The theory of it which is taught to-day in the theological schools of St Andrew's would have sounded strange from the pulpit of your once proud cathedral. As the same thought expresses itself in many languages, so spiritual truths assume ever-varying forms. The garment fades—the moths devour it—the woven fibres disintegrate and turn to dust. The idea only is immortal, and never fades. The hermit who made his cell below the cliff where the cathedral stands, the monkish architect who designed the plan of it, the princes who brought it to perfection, the Protestants who shattered it into ruin, the preacher of last Sunday at the University church, would have many a quarrel were they to meet now before they would understand each other. But at the bottom of the minds of all the same thought would be predominant—that they were soldiers of the Almighty, commissioned to fight with lies and selfishness, and that all alike, they and those

against whom they were contending, where in his hands, to deal with after his own pleasure.

Again six centuries go by. Christianity becomes the religion of the Roman Empire. The Empire divides, and the Church is divided with it. Europe is overrun by the Northern nations. The power of the Western Caesars breaks in pieces, but the Western Church stands erect, makes its way into the hearts of the conquerors, penetrates the German forests, opens a path into Britain and Ireland. By the noble Gothic nations it is welcomed with passionate enthusiasm. The warriors of Odin are transformed into a Christian chivalry, and the wild Valhalla into a Christian Heaven. Fiery passionate nations are not tamed in a generation or a century, but a new conception of what was praiseworthy and excellent had taken hold of their imagination and the understanding. Kings, when their day of toil was over, laid down crown and sword, and retired into cloisters, to pass what remained of life to them in prayers and meditations on eternity. The supreme object of reverence was no longer the hero of the battle-field, but the barefoot missionary who was carrying the Gospel among the tribes that were still untaught. So beautiful in their conception of him was the character of one of these wandering priests that their stories formed a new mythology. So vast were the real miracles which they were working on men's souls that wonders of a more ordinary sort were assigned to them as a matter of course. They raised the dead, they healed the sick, they cast out devils with a word or with the sign of the cross. Plain facts were too poor for the enthusiasm of German piety ; and noble human figures were exhibited, as it were, in the resplendent light of a painted window in the effort to do them exaggerated honour.

It was pity, for truth only smells sweet for ever, and illusions, however innocent, are deadly as the canker-worm. Long cycles had to pass before the fruit of these poison-seeds would ripen. The practical result meanwhile was to substitute in the minds of the sovereign races which were to take the lead in the coming era the principles of the moral law for the law of force and the sword.

The Eastern branch of the divided Church experienced meanwhile a less happy fortune. In the East there was no virgin soil like the great noble Teutonic peoples. Asia was a worn-out stage on which drama after drama of history had been played and played out. Languid luxury only was there, huge aggregation of wealth in particular localities, and the no less inevitable shadow attached to luxury by the necessities of things, oppression and misery and squalor. Christianity and the world had come to terms after the established fashion—the world to be let alone in its pleasures and its sins; the Church relegated to opinion, with free liberty to split doctrinal hairs to the end of time. The work of the Church's degradation had begun, even before it accepted the tainted hand of Constantine. Already in the third century speculative Christianity had become the fashionable creed of Alexandria, and had purchased the favour of patrician congregations, if not by open tolerance of vice, yet by leaving it to grow unresisted. St Clement details contemptuously the inventory of the boudoir of a fine lady of his flock, the list of essences on her toilet-table, the shoes, sandals, and slippers with which her dainty feet were decorated in endless variety. He describes her as she ascends the steps of the *βασιλική*, to which she was going for what she called her prayers, with a page lifting up her train. He paints

her as she walks along the street, her petticoats projecting with some horsehair arrangement behind, and the street boys jeering at her as she passes.

All that Christianity was meant to do in making life simple and habits pure was left undone, while, with a few exceptions, like that of St Clement himself, the intellectual energy of its bishops and teachers was exhausted in spinning endless cobwebs of metaphysical theology. Human life at the best is enveloped in darkness; we know not what we are or whither we are bound. Religion is the light by which we are to see our way along the moral pathways without straying into the brake or the morass. We are not to look at religion itself, but at surrounding things with the help of religion. If we fasten our attention upon the light itself, analyzing it into its component rays, speculating on the union and composition of the substances of which it is composed, not only will it no longer serve us for a guide, but our dazzled senses, lose their natural powers; we should grope our way more safely in conscious blindness.

When the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness.

In the place of the old material idolatry we erect a new idolatry of words and phrases. Our duty is no longer to be true, and honest, and brave, and self-denying, and pure, but to be exact in our formulas, to hold accurately some nice and curious proposition, to place damnation in straying a hair's breadth from some symbol which exults in being unintelligible, and salvation in the skill with which the mind can balance itself on some intellectual tightrope.

There is no more instructive phenomenon in history than the ease and rapidity with which the Arabian caliphs lopped off the fairest provinces of the Eastern Empire. When nations are easily conquered, we may

be sure that they have first lost their moral self-respect. When their religions, as they call them, go down at a breath, those religions have become already but bubbles of vapour. The laws of Heaven are long-enduring, but their patience comes to an end at last. Because justice is not executed speedily men persuade themselves that there is no such thing as justice. But the lame foot, as the Greek proverb said, overtakes the swift one in the end ; and the longer the forbearance the sharper the retribution when it comes.

As the Greek theology was one of the most complicated accounts ever offered of the nature of God and His relation to man, so the message of Mahomet, when he first unfolded the green banner, was one of the most simple. There is no god but God : God is King, and you must and shall obey His will. This was Islam, as it was first offered at the sword's point to people who had lost the power of understanding any other argument. Your images are wood and stone ; your metaphysics are words without understanding ; the world lies in wickedness and wretchedness because you have forgotten the statutes of your Master, and you shall go back to those ; you shall fulfil the purpose for which you were set to live upon the earth, or you shall not live at all.

Tremendous inroad upon the liberties of conscience ! What right, it is asked, have those people that you have been calling soldiers of the Almighty to interfere by force with the opinions of others ? Let them leave us alone ; we meddle not with them. Let them, if they please, obey those laws they talk of ; we have other notions of such things ; we will obey ours, and let the result judge between us. The result was judging between them. The meek Apostle with no weapon but his word and his example, and winning victories

by himself submitting to be killed, is a fairer object than a fierce Kaled, calling himself the sword of the Almighty. But we cannot order for ourselves in what way these things shall be. The caitiff Damascenes to whom Kaled gave the alternative of the Koran or death were men themselves, who had hands to hold a sword with if they had heart to use it, or a creed for which they cared to risk their lives. In such a quarrel superior strength and courage are the signs of the presence of a nobler conviction.

To the question, 'What right have you to interfere with us?' there is in exceptional times of convulsion but one answer: 'We must. These things which we tell you are true; and in your hearts you know it; your own cowardice convicts you. The moral laws of your Maker are written in your consciences as well as in ours. If you disobey them you bring disaster not only on your own wretched selves, but on all around you. It is our common concern, and if you will not submit, in the name of our Master we will compel you.'

Any fanatic, it will be said, might use the same language. Is not history full of instances of dreamers or impostors, 'boasting themselves to be somebody,' who for some wild illusion, or for their own ambition, have thrown the world into convulsions? Is not Mahomet himself a signal—the most signal—illustration of it? I should say rather that when men have risen in arms for a false cause the event has proved it by the cause coming to nothing. The world is not so constituted that courage, and strength, and endurance, and organization, and success long sustained are to be obtained in the service of falsehood. If I could think that, I should lose the most convincing reason for believing that we are governed by a moral power.

The moral laws of our being execute themselves through the instrumentality of men ; and in those great movements which determine the moral condition of many nations through many centuries, the stronger side, it seems to me, has uniformly been the better side, and stronger because it has been better.

I am not upholding Mahomet as if he had been a perfect man, or the Koran as a second Bible. The crescent was no sun, nor even a complete moon reigning full-orbed in the night heaven. The light there was in it was but reflected from the sacred books of the Jews and the Arab traditions. The morality of it was defective. The detailed conception of man's duties inferior, far inferior, to what St Martin and St Patrick, St Columba and St Augustine were teaching or had taught in Western Europe. Mahometanism rapidly degenerated. The first caliphs stood far above Saladin. The descent from Saladin to a modern Moslem despot is like a fall over a precipice. All established things, nations, constitutions, all established things which have life in them, have also the seeds of death. They grow, they have their day of usefulness, they decay and pass away, 'lest one good custom should corrupt the world.'

But the light which there was in the Moslem creed was real. It taught the omnipotence and omnipresence of one eternal Spirit, the Maker and Ruler of all things, by whose everlasting purpose all things were, and whose will all things must obey ; and this central truth, to which later experience and broader knowledge can add nothing, it has taught so clearly and so simply that in Islam there has been no room for heresy, and scarcely for schism.

The Koran has been accused of countenancing sensual vice. Rather it bridled and brought within

limits a sensuality which before was unbounded. It forbade and has absolutely extinguished, wherever Islam is professed, the bestial drunkenness which is the disgrace of our Christian English and Scottish towns. Even now, after centuries of decay, the Mussulman probably governs his life by the Koran more accurately than most Christians obey the Sermon on the Mount or the Ten Commandments. In our own India, where the Moslem creed retains its relative superiority to the superstitions of the native races, the Mussulman is a higher order of being. Were the English to withdraw he would retake the sovereignty of the peninsula by natural right—not because he has larger bones and sinews, but by superiority of intellect and heart; in other words, because he has a truer faith.

I said that while Christianity degenerated in the East with extreme rapidity, in the West it retained its firmer characters. It became the vitalizing spirit of a new organization of society. All that we call modern civilization in a sense which deserves the name is the visible expression of the transforming power of the Gospel.

I said also that by the side of the healthy influences of regeneration there were sown along with it the germs of evil to come. All living ideas, from the necessity of things, take up into their constitutions whatever forces are already working round them. The most ardent aspirations after truth will not anticipate knowledge, and the errors of the imagination become consecrated as surely as the purest impulses of conscience. So long as the laws of the physical world remain a mystery, the action of all uncomprehended phenomena, the movements of the heavenly bodies, the winds and storms, famines, murrains, and human epidemics, are ascribed to the voluntary interference of supernatural

beings. The belief in witches and fairies, in spells and talismans, could not be dispelled by science, for science did not exist. The Church therefore entered into competition with her evil rivals on their own ground. The saint came into the field against the enchanters. The powers of charms and amulets were eclipsed by martyrs' relics, sacraments, and holy water. The magician, with the devil at his back, was made to yield to the divine powers imparted to priests by spiritual descent in the imposition of hands.

Thus a gigantic system of supernaturalism overspread the entire Western world. There was no deliberate imposition. The clergy were as ignorant as the people of true relations between natural cause and effect. Their business, so far as they were conscious of their purpose, was to contend against the works of the devil. They saw practically that they were able to convert men from violence and impurity to piety and self-restraint. Their very humility forbade them to attribute such wonderful results to their own teaching. When it was universally believed that human beings could make covenants with Satan by signing their names in blood, what more natural than that they should assume, for instance, that the sprinkling of water, the inaugurating ceremony of the purer and better life, should exert a mysterious mechanical influence upon the character?

If regeneration by baptism, however, with its kindred imaginations, was not true, innocence of intention could not prevent the natural consequences of falsehood. Time went on; knowledge increased; doubt stole in, and with doubt the passionate determination to preserve beliefs at all hazards which had grown too dear to superstition to be parted with. In the twelfth century the mystery called transubstantia-

tion had come to be regarded with widespread misgiving. To encounter scepticism, there then arose for the first time what have been called pious frauds. It was not perceived that men who lend themselves consciously to lies, with however excellent an intention, will become eventually deliberate rogues. The clergy doubtless believed that in the consecration of the elements an invisible change was really and truly effected. But to produce an effect on the secular mind the invisible had to be made visible. A general practice sprung up to pretend that in the breaking of the wafer real blood had gushed out; that real pieces of flesh were found between the fingers. The precious things thus produced were awfully preserved, and with the Pope's blessing were deposited in shrines for the strengthening of faith and the confutation of the presumptuous unbeliever.

When a start has once been made on the road of deception, the after progress is a rapid one. The desired effect was not produced. Incredulity increased. Imposture ran a race with unbelief in the vain hope of silencing inquiry, and with imposture all genuine love for spiritual or moral truth disappeared.

You all know to what condition the Catholic Church had sunk at the beginning of the sixteenth century. An insolent hierarchy, with an army of priests behind them, dominated every country in Europe. The Church was like a hard nutshell round a shrivelled kernel. The priests in parting with their sincerity had lost the control over their own appetites which only sincerity can give. Profligate in their own lives, they extended to the laity the same easy latitude which they asserted for their own conduct. Religious duty no longer consisted in leading a virtuous life, but in purchasing immunity for self-indulgence by one

of the thousand remedies which Church officials were ever ready to dispense at an adequate price.

The pleasant arrangement came to an end—a sudden and terrible one. Christianity had not been upon the earth for nothing. The spiritual organization of the Church was corrupt to the core; but in the general awakening of Europe it was impossible to conceal the contrast between the doctrines taught in the Catholic pulpits and the creed of which they were the counterfeit. Again and again the gathering indignation sputtered out to be savagely repressed. At last it pleased Pope Leo, who wanted money to finish St Peter's, to send about spiritual hawkers with wares which were called indulgences—notes to be presented at the gates of purgatory as passports to the easiest places there—and then Luther spoke and the whirlwind burst.

I can but glance at the Reformation in Germany. Luther himself was one of the grandest men that ever lived on earth. Never was any one more loyal to the light that was in him, braver, truer, or wider-minded in the noblest sense of the word. The share of the work which fell to him Luther accomplished most perfectly. But he was exceptionally fortunate in one way, that in Saxony he had his sovereign on his side, and the enemy, however furious, could not reach him with fleshly weapons, and could but grind his teeth and curse. Other nations who had caught Luther's spirit had to win their liberty on harder terms, and the Catholic churchmen were able to add to their other crimes the cruelty of fiends. Princes and politicians, who had state reasons for disliking popular outbursts, sided with the established spiritual authorities. Heresy was assailed with fire and sword, and a spirit harsher than Luther's was needed to steel the converts' hearts for

the trials which came upon them. Lutheranism, when Luther himself was gone, and the thing which we in England know as Anglicanism, were inclined to temporizing and half-measures. The Lutheran congregations were but half-emancipated from superstition, and shrank from pressing the struggle to extremities ; and half-measures meant half-heartedness, convictions which were but half-convictions, and truth with an alloy of falsehood. Half-measures, however, would not quench the bonfires of Philip of Spain, or raise men in France or Scotland who would meet crest to crest the Princes of the House of Lorraine. The Reformers required a position more sharply defined, and a sterner leader, and that leader they found in John Calvin.

There is no occasion to say much of Calvin's personal history. His name is now associated only with gloom and austerity. It may be true enough that he rarely laughed. He had none of Luther's genial and sunny humour. Could they have exchanged conditions, Luther's temper might have been somewhat grimmer, but he would never have been entirely like Calvin. Nevertheless, for hard times hard men are needed, and intellects which can pierce to the roots where truth and lies part company. It fares ill with the soldiers of religion when 'the accursed thing' is in their camp. And this is to be said of Calvin, that so far as the state of knowledge permitted, no eye could have detected more keenly the unsound spots in the received creed of the Church, nor was there reformer in Europe so resolute to excise, tear out, and destroy what was distinctly seen to be false—so resolute to establish what was true in its place, and make truth to the last fibre of it the rule of practical life.

Calvinism as it existed at Geneva, and as it endeavoured to be wherever it took root for a century

and a half after him, was not a system of opinion, but an attempt to make the will of God as revealed in the Bible an authoritative guide for social as well as personal direction. Men wonder why the Calvinists, being so doctrinal, yet seemed to dwell so much and so emphatically on the Old Testament. It was because in the Old Testament they found, or thought they found, a divine example of national government, a distinct indication of the laws which men were ordered to follow, with visible and immediate punishments attached to disobedience. At Geneva, as for a time in Scotland, moral sins were treated after the example of the Mosaic law, as crimes to be punished by the magistrate. 'Elsewhere,' said Knox, speaking of Geneva, 'the Word of God is taught as purely, but never anywhere have I seen God obeyed as faithfully.'¹

If it was a dream, it was at least a noble one. The Calvinists have been called intolerant. Intolerance of an enemy who is trying to kill you seems to me a pardonable state of mind. It is no easy matter to tolerate lies clearly convicted of being lies under any circumstances ; specially it is not easy to tolerate lies which strut about in the name of religion ; but there is no reason to suppose that the Calvinists at the beginning would have thought of meddling with the Church if they had been themselves let alone. They would have formed communities apart. Like the Israelites whom they wished to resemble, they would have withdrawn into the wilderness—the Pilgrim Fathers actually did so withdraw into the wilderness of New England—to

¹ In burning witches the Calvinists followed their model too exactly ; but it is to be remembered that they really believed these poor creatures to have made a compact with Satan. And, as regards morality, it may be doubted whether inviting spirit-rappers to dinner, and allowing them to pretend to consult our dead relations, is very much more innocent. The first method is but excess of indignation with evil ; the second is complacent toying with it.

worship the God of their fathers, and would have left argument and example to work their natural effect. Norman Leslie did not kill Cardinal Beaton down in the castle yonder because he was a Catholic, but because he was a murderer. The Catholics chose to add to their already incredible creed a fresh article, that they were entitled to hang and burn those who differed from them ; and in this quarrel the Calvinists, Bible in hand, appealed to the God of battles. They grew harsher, fiercer—if you please—more fanatical. It was extremely natural that they should. They dwelt, as pious men are apt to dwell in suffering and sorrow, on the all-disposing power of Providence. Their burden grew lighter as they considered that God had so determined that they must bear it. But they attracted to their ranks almost every man in Western Europe that 'hated a lie.' They were crushed down, but they rose again. They were splintered and torn, but no power could bend or melt them. They had many faults : let him that is without sin cast a stone at them. They abhorred as no body of men ever more abhorred all conscious mendacity, all impurity, all moral wrong of every kind so far as they could recognize it. Whatever exists at this moment in England and Scotland of conscientious fear of doing evil is the remnant of the convictions which were branded by the Calvinists into the people's hearts. Though they failed to destroy Romanism, though it survives and may survive long as an opinion, they drew its fangs ; they forced it to abandon that detestable principle, that it was entitled to murder those who dissented from it. Nay, it may be said that by having shamed Romanism out of its practical corruption the Calvinists enabled it to revive.

Why, it is asked, were they so dogmatic ? Why could they not be contented to teach men reasonably

and quietly that to be wicked was to be miserable, that in the indulgence of immoderate passions they would find less happiness than in adhering to the rules of justice, or yielding to the impulses of more generous emotions? And, for the rest, why could they not let fools be fools, and leave opinion free about matters of which neither they nor others could know anything certain at all?

I reply that it is not true that goodness is synonymous with happiness. The most perfect being who ever trod the soil of this planet was called the Man of Sorrows. If happiness means absence of care and inexperience of painful emotion, the best securities for it are a hard heart and a good digestion. If morality has no better foundation than a tendency to promote happiness, its sanction is but a feeble uncertainty. If it be recognized as part of the constitution of the world, it carries with it its right to command; and those who see clearly what it is, will insist on submission to it, and derive authority from the distinctness of their recognition, to enforce submission where their power extends. Philosophy goes no further than probabilities, and in every assertion keeps a doubt in reserve. Compare the remonstrance of the casual passer-by if a mob of ruffians are fighting in the street, with the downright energy of the policeman who strikes in fearlessly, one against a dozen, as a minister of the law. There is the same difference through life between the man who has a sure conviction and him whose thoughts never rise beyond a 'perhaps.'

Every fanatic may say as much, it is again answered, for the wildest madness. But the elementary principles of morality are not forms of madness. No one pretends that it is uncertain whether truth is better than falsehood, or justice than injustice. Speculation can

eat away the sanction, superstition can erect rival duties, but neither one nor the other pretends to touch the fact that these principles exist, and the very essence and life of all great religious movements is the recognition of them as of authority and as part of the eternal framework of things.

There is, however, it must be allowed, something in what these objectors say. The power of Calvinism has waned. The discipline which it once aspired to maintain has fallen slack. Desire for ease and self-indulgence drag for ever in quiet times at the heel of noble aspirations, while the shadow struggles to remain and preserve its outline when the substance is passing away. The argumentative and logical side of Calvin's mind has created once more a fatal opportunity for a separation between opinion and morality. We have learnt, as we say, to make the best of both worlds, to take political economy for the rule of our conduct, and to relegate religion into the profession of orthodox doctrines. Systems have been invented to explain the inexplicable. Metaphors have been translated into formulas, and paradoxes intelligible to emotion have been thrust upon the acceptance of the reason; while duty, the loftiest of all sensations which we are permitted to experience, has been resolved into the acceptance of a scheme of salvation for the individual human soul. Was it not written long ago, 'He that will save his soul shall lose it'? If we think of religion only as a means of escaping what we call the wrath to come, we shall not escape it; we are already under it; we are under the burden of death, for we care only for ourselves.

This was not the religion of your fathers; this was not the Calvinism which overthrew spiritual wickedness, and hurled kings from their thrones, and purged Eng-

land and Scotland, for a time at least, of lies and charlatany. Calvinism was the spirit which rises in revolt against untruth; the spirit which, as I have shown you, has appeared, and reappeared, and in due time will appear again, unless God be a delusion and man be as the beasts that perish. For it is but the in flashing upon the conscience with overwhelming force of the nature and origin of the laws by which mankind are governed—laws which exist, whether we acknowledge them or whether we deny them, and will have their way, to our weal or woe, according to the attitude in which we please to place ourselves towards them—inherent, like electricity, in the nature of things, not made by us, not to be altered by us, but to be discerned and obeyed by us at our everlasting peril.

Nay, rather electricity is but a property of material things, and matter and all that belongs to it may one day fade away like a cloud and vanish. The moral law is inherent in eternity. ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away.’ The law is the expression of the will of the Spirit of the Universe. The spirit in man which corresponds to and perceives the Eternal Spirit is part of its essence, and immortal as it is immortal. The Calvinists called the eye within us the Inspiration of the Almighty. Aristotle could see that it was not of earth, or any creature of space and time :

δὲ γὰρ νοῦς (he says) οὐσία τις οὐσία ζοικεύει γγῆτι γνεσθαι καὶ οὐ φθείρεσθαι.

What the thing is which we call ourselves we know not. It may be true—I for one care not if it be—that the descent of our mortal bodies may be traced through an ascending series to some glutinous organism on the rocks of the primeval ocean. It is nothing to me how

the Maker of me has been pleased to construct the perishable frame which I call my body. It is *mine*, but it is not *me*. The *soul*, the intellectual spirit, being an *ovula*—an essence—we believe to be an incorruptible something which has been engendered in us from another source. As Wordsworth says:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere had its setting,
And cometh from afar ;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come,
From heaven, which is our home.

A BISHOP OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.¹

To the sceptical student of the nineteenth century the ecclesiastical biographies of mediæval Europe are for the most part unprofitable studies. The writers of them were generally monks. The object for which they were composed was either the edification of the brethren of the convent, or the glorifying of its founder or benefactor. The Holy See in considering a claim to canonization disregarded the ordinary details of character and conduct. It dwelt exclusively on the exceptional and the wonderful, and the noblest of lives possessed but little interest for it unless accompanied by evidences of miracles, performed directly by the candidate while on earth or by his relics after his departure. Instead of pictures of real men the biographers present us with glorified images of what, in their opinion, the Church heroes ought to have been. St Cuthbert becomes as legendary as Theseus, and the authentic figure is swathed in an embroidered envelope of legends through which usually no trace of the genuine lineaments is allowed to penetrate.

¹ *Magna Vita S. Hugonis Episcopi Lincolnensis.* From MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the Imperial Library, Paris. Edited by the Rev. James F. Dimock, M.A., Rector of Bamburgh, Yorkshire.

It happens however, occasionally, that in the midst of the imaginative rubbish which has thus come down to us, we encounter something of a character entirely different. We find ourselves in the hands of writers who themselves saw what they describe, who knew as well as we know the distinction between truth and falsehood, and who could notice and appreciate genuine human qualities. Amidst the obscure forms of mediæval history we are brought face to face with authentic flesh and blood, and we are able to see in clear sunlight the sort of person who, in those ages, was considered especially admirable, and, alive or dead, was held up to the reverence of mankind. To one of these I propose in the present article to draw some brief attention. It is the life of St Hugo of Avalon, a monk of the Grande Chartreuse, who was invited by Henry II. into England, became Bishop of Lincoln, and was the designer, and in part builder, of Lincoln Cathedral. The biographer was his chaplain and constant companion—Brother Adam—a monk like himself, though of another order, who became afterwards Abbot of Ensham; and having learnt, perhaps from the Bishop himself, the detestableness of lying, has executed his task with simple and scrupulous fidelity. The readers whose interests he was considering were, as usual, the inmates of convents. He omits, as he himself tells us, many of the outer and more secular incidents of the Bishop's life, as unsuited to his audience. We have glimpses of kings, courts, and great councils, with other high matters of national moment. The years which the Bishop spent in England were rich in events. There was the conquest of Ireland; there were Welsh and French wars; the long struggle of Henry II. and his sons; and, when Henry passed away, there was the Grand Crusade.

Then followed the captivity of Cœur de Lion and the treachery of John ; and Hugo's work, it is easy to see, was not confined to the management of his diocese. On all this, however, Abbot Adam observes entire silence, not considering our curiosity, but the concerns of the souls of his own monks, whom he would not distract by too lively representations of the world which they had abandoned.

The book however, as it stands, is so rare a treasure that we will waste no time in describing what it is not. Within its own compass it contains the most vivid picture which has come down to us of England as it then was, and of the first Plantagenet kings.

Bishop Hugo came into the world in the mountainous country near Grenoble, on the borders of Savoy. Abbot Adam dwells with a certain pride upon his patron's parentage. He tells us indeed, sententiously, that it is better to be noble in morals than to be noble in blood—that to be born undistinguished is a less misfortune than to live so—but he regards a noble family only as an honourable setting for a nature which was noble in itself. The Bishop was one of three children of a Lord of Avalon, and was born in a castle near Pontcharra. His mother died when he was eight years old ; and his father having lost the chief interest which bound him to life, divided his estates between his two other sons, and withdrew with the little one into an adjoining monastery. There was a college attached to it, where the children of many of the neighbouring barons were educated. Hugo, however, was from the first designed for a religious life, and mixed little with the other boys. ' You, my little fellow,' his tutor said to him, ' I am bringing up for Christ : you must not learn to play or trifle.' The old Lord became a monk. Hugo grew up beside him in the

convent, waiting on him as he became infirm, and smoothing the downward road; and meanwhile learning whatever of knowledge and practical piety his preceptors were able to provide. The life, it is likely, was not wanting in austerity, but the comparatively easy rule did not satisfy Hugo's aspirations. The theory of 'religion,' as the conventional system in all its forms was termed, was the conquest of self, the reduction of the entire nature to the control of the better part of it; and as the seat of self lay in the body, as temptation to do wrong, then as always, lay, directly or indirectly, in the desire for some bodily indulgence, or the dread of some bodily pain, the method pursued was the inuring of the body to the hardest fare, and the producing indifference to cold, hunger, pain, or any other calamity which the chances of life could inflict upon it. Men so trained could play their part in life, whether high or low, with wonderful advantage. Wealth had no attraction for them. The world could give them nothing which they had learnt to desire, and take nothing from them which they cared to lose. The orders, however, differed in severity; and at this time the highest discipline, moral and bodily, was to be found only among the Carthusians. An incidental visit with the prior of his own convent to the Grande Chartreuse, determined Hugo to seek admission into this extraordinary society.

It was no light thing which he was undertaking. The majestic situation of the Grande Chartreuse itself, the loneliness, the seclusion, the atmosphere of sanctity, which hung around it, the mysterious beings who had made their home there, fascinated his imagination. A stern old monk, to whom he first communicated his intention, supposing that he was led away by a passing fancy, looked grimly at his pale face and delicate limbs,

and roughly told him that he was a fool. 'Young man,' the monk said to him, 'the men who inhabit these rocks are hard as the rocks themselves. They have no mercy on their own bodies and none on others. The dress will scrape the flesh from your bones. The discipline will tear the bones themselves out of such frail limbs as yours.'

The Carthusians combined in themselves the severities of the hermits and of the regular orders. Each member of the fraternity lived in his solitary cell in the rock, meeting his companions only in the chapel, or for instruction, or for the business of the house. They ate no meat. A loaf of bread was given to every brother on Sunday morning at the refectory door, which was to last him through the week. An occasional mess of gruel was all that was allowed in addition. His bedding was a horse-cloth, a pillow, and a skin. His dress was a horsehair shirt, covered *outside* with linen, which was worn night and day, and the white cloak of the order, generally a sheepskin, and unlined—all else was bare. He was bound by vows of the strictest obedience. The order had business in all parts of the world. Now some captive was to be rescued from the Moors; now some earl or king had been treading on the Church's privileges; a brother was chosen to interpose in the name of the Chartreuse: he received his credentials and had to depart on the instant, with no furniture but his stick, to walk, it might be, to the furthest corner of Europe.

A singular instance of the kind occurs incidentally in the present narrative. A certain brother Einard, who came ultimately to England, had been sent to Spain, to Granada, to Africa itself. Returning through Provence he fell in with some of the Albigenses, who spoke slightly of the sacraments. The hard Carthusian saw but one course to follow with men he deemed

rebels to his Lord. He was the first to urge the crusade which ended in their destruction. He roused the nearest orthodox nobles to arms, and Hugo's biographer tells delightedly how the first invasions were followed up by others on a larger scale, and 'the brute and pestilent race, unworthy of the name of men, were cut away by the toil of the faithful, and by God's mercy destroyed.'

'Pitiless to themselves,' as the old monk said, 'they had no pity on any other man,' as Einard afterwards was himself to feel. Even Hugo at times disapproved of their extreme severity. 'God,' he said, alluding to some cruel action of the society, 'God tempers his anger with compassion. When he drove Adam from Paradise, he at least gave him a coat of skins: man knows not what mercy means.'

Einard, after this Albigensian affair, was ordered in the midst of a bitter winter to repair to Denmark. He was a very aged man—a hundred years old, his brother monks believed—broken at any rate with age and toil. He shrank from the journey, he begged to be spared, and when the command was persisted in, he refused obedience. He was instantly expelled. Half-clad, amidst the ice and snow, he wandered from one religious house to another. In all he was refused admission. At last, one bitter frosty night he appeared penitent at the gate of the Chartreuse, and prayed to be forgiven. The porter was forbidden to open to him till morning, but left the old man to shiver in the snow through the darkness.

'By my troth, brother,' Einard said the next day to him, 'had you been a bean last night, between my teeth, they would have chopped you in pieces in spite of me.'

Such were the monks of the Chartreuse, among

whom the son of the Avalon noble desired to be enrolled, as the highest favour which could be shown him upon earth. His petition was entertained. He was allowed to enlist in the spiritual army, in which he rapidly distinguished himself; and at the end of twenty years he had acquired a name through France as the ablest member of the world-famed fraternity.

It was at this time, somewhere about 1174, that Henry II. conceived the notion of introducing the Carthusians into England. In the premature struggle to which he had committed himself with the Church, he had been hopelessly worsted. The Constitutions of Clarendon had been torn in pieces. He had himself, of his own accord, done penance at the shrine of the murdered Becket. The haughty sovereign of England, as a symbol of the sincerity of his submission, had knelt in the Chapter-house of Canterbury, presenting voluntarily there his bare shoulders to be flogged by the monks. His humiliation, so far from degrading him, had restored him to the affection of his subjects, and his endeavour thenceforward was to purify and reinvigorate the proud institution against which he had too rashly matched his strength.

In pursuance of his policy he had applied to the Chartreuse for assistance, and half a dozen monks, among them brother Einard, whose Denmark mission was exchanged for the English, had been sent over and established at Witham, a village not far from Frome in Somersetshire. Sufficient pains had not been taken to prepare for their reception. The Carthusians were a solitary order and required exclusive possession of the estates set apart for their use. The Saxon population were still in occupation of their holdings, and being Crown tenants, saw themselves threatened with eviction in favour of foreigners. Quarrels had arisen and ill-

feeling, and the Carthusians, proud as the proudest of nobles, and considering that in coming to England they were rather conferring favours than receiving them, resented the being compelled to struggle for tenements which they had not sought or desired. The first prior threw up his office and returned to the Chartreuse. The second died immediately after of chagrin and disgust; and the King, who was then in Normandy, heard to his extreme mortification that the remaining brethren were threatening to take staff in hand and march back to their homes. The Count de Maurenne to whom he communicated his distress mentioned Hugo's name to him. It was determined to send for Hugo, and Fitzjocelyn, Bishop of Bath, with other venerable persons carried the invitation to the Chartreuse.

To Hugo himself, meanwhile, as if in preparation for the destiny which was before him, a singular experience was at that moment occurring. He was now about forty years old. It is needless to say that he had duly practised the usual austerities prescribed by his rule. Whatever discipline could do to kill the carnal nature in him had been carried out to its utmost harshness. He was a man, however, of great physical strength. His flesh was not entirely dead, and he was going where superiority to worldly temptation would be specially required. Just before Fitzjocelyn arrived he was assailed suddenly by emotions so extremely violent that he said he would rather face the pains of Gehenna than encounter them again. His mind was unaffected, but the devil had him at advantage in his sleep. He prayed, he flogged himself, he fasted, he confessed; still Satan was allowed to buffet him, and though he had no fear for his soul, he thought his body would die in the struggle. One night in par-

ticular the agony reached its crisis. He lay tossing on his uneasy pallet, the angel of darkness trying with all his allurements to tempt his conscience into acquiescence in evil. An angel from above appeared to enter the cell as a spectator of the conflict. Hugo imagined that he sprung to him, clutched him, and wrestled like Jacob with him to extort a blessing but could not succeed, and at last he sank exhausted on the ground. In the sleep or the unconsciousness which followed, an aged prior of the Chartreuse who had admitted him as a boy to the order, had died and had since been canonized, seemed to lean over him as he lay and inquired the cause of his distress. He said that he was afflicted to agony by the law of sin that was in his members, and unless some one aided him he would perish. The saint drew from his breast what appeared to be a knife, opened his body, drew a fiery mass of something from the bowels, and flung it out of the door. He awoke and found that it was morning and that he was perfectly cured.

‘Did you never feel a return of these motions of the flesh?’ asked Adam, when Hugo related the story to him.

‘Not never,’ Hugo answered, ‘but never to a degree that gave me the slightest trouble.’

‘I have been particular,’ wrote Adam afterwards, ‘to relate this exactly as it happened, a false account of it having gone abroad that it was the Blessed Virgin who appeared instead of the prior,’ and that Hugo was relieved by an operation of a less honourable kind.

Visionary nonsense the impatient reader may say; and had Hugo become a dreamer of the cloister, a persecutor like St Dominic, or a hysterical fanatic like Ignatius Loyola, we might pass by it as a morbid illusion. But there never lived a man to whom the word

morbid could be applied with less propriety. In the Hugo of Avalon with whom we are now to become acquainted, we shall see nothing but the sunniest cheerfulness, strong masculine sense, inflexible purpose, uprightness in word and deed; with an ever-flowing stream of genial and buoyant humour.

In the story of the temptation, therefore, we do but see the final conquest of the selfish nature in him, which left his nobler qualities free to act, wherever he might find himself.

Fitzjocelyn anticipating difficulty had brought with him the Bishop of Grenoble to support his petition. He was received at first with universal clamour. Hugo was the brightest jewel of the order; Hugo could not be parted with for any price on earth. He himself, entirely happy where he was, anticipated nothing but trouble, but left his superiors to decide for him. At length sense of duty prevailed. The brethren felt that he was a shining light, of which the world must not be deprived. The Bishop of Grenoble reminded them that Christ had left heaven and come to earth for sinners' souls, and that his example ought to be imitated. It was arranged that Hugo was to go, and a few weeks later he was at Witham.

He was welcomed there as an angel from heaven. He found everything in confusion, the few monks living in wattled huts in the forest, the village still in possession of its old occupants, and bad blood and discontent on all hands. The first difficulty was to enter upon the lands without wrong to the people, and the history of a large eviction in the twelfth century will not be without its instructiveness even at the present day. One thing Hugo was at once decided upon, that the foundation would not flourish if it was built upon injustice. He repaired to Henry, and as a

first step induced him to offer the tenants (Crown serfs or villeins) either entire enfranchisement or farms of equal value, or any other of the royal manors, to be selected by themselves. Some chose one, some the other. The next thing was compensation for improvements, houses, farm-buildings, and fences erected by the people at their own expense. The Crown, if it resumed possession, must pay for these or wrong would be done. 'Unless your Majesty satisfy these poor men to the last obol,' said Hugo to Henry, 'we cannot take possession.'

The King consented, and the people, when the Prior carried back the news of the arrangement, were satisfied to go.

But this was not all. Many of them were removing no great distance, and could carry with them the materials of their houses. Hugo resolved that they should keep these things, and again marched off to the court.

'My Lord,' said Hugo, 'I am but a new comer in your realm, and I have already enriched your Majesty with a quantity of cottages and farm-steadings.'

'Riches I could well have spared,' said Henry, laughing. 'You have almost made a beggar of me. What am I to do with old huts and rotten timber?'

'Perhaps your Majesty will give them to me,' said Hugo. 'It is but a trifle,' he added, when the King hesitated, 'It is my first request, and only a small one.'

'This is a terrible fellow that we have brought among us,' laughed the King; 'if he is so powerful with his persuasions, what will he do if he tries force? Let it be as he says. We must not drive him to extremities.'

Thus, with the good will of all parties, and no

wrong done to any man, the first obstacles were overcome. The villagers went away happy. The monks entered upon their lands amidst prayers and blessings, the King himself being as pleased as any one at his first experience of the character of Prior Hugo.

Henry had soon occasion to see more of him. He had promised to build the monks a house and chapel, but between Ireland, and Wales, and Scotland, and his dominions in France, and his three mutinous sons, he had many troubles on his hands. Time passed and the building was not begun, and Hugo's flock grew mutinous once more ; twice he sent Henry a reminder, twice came back fair words and nothing more. The brethren began to hint that the Prior was afraid of the powers of this world, and dared not speak plainly ; and one of them, Brother Gerard, an old monk with high blood in his veins, declared that he would himself go and tell Henry some unpleasant truths. Hugo had discovered in his interviews with him that the King was no ordinary man, 'vir sagacis ingenii, et inscrutabilis fere animi.' He made no opposition, but he proposed to go himself along with this passionate gentleman, and he, Gerard, and the aged Einard, who was mentioned above, went together as a deputation.

The King received them as 'coelestes angelos,'—angels from heaven. He professed the deepest reverence for their characters, and the greatest anxiety to please them, but he said nothing precise and determined, and the fiery Gerard burst out as he intended. Carthusian monks, it seems, considered themselves entitled to speak to kings on entirely equal terms. 'Finish your work or leave it, my Lord King,' the proud Burgundian said. 'It shall no more be any concern to me. You have a pleasant realm here in

England, but for myself I prefer to take my leave of you and go back to my desert Chartreuse. You give us bread, and you think you are doing a great thing for us. We do not need your bread. It is better for us to return to our Alps. You count money lost which you spend on your soul's health ; keep it then, since you love it so dearly. Or rather, you cannot keep it ; for you must die and let it go to others who will not thank you.'

Hugo tried to check the stream of words, but Gerard and Einard were both older than he, and refused to be restrained.

'Regem videres philosophantem : ' the King was apparently meditating. His face did not alter, nor did he speak a word till the Carthusian had done.

'And what do you think, my good fellow,' he said at last, after a pause, looking up and turning to Hugo : 'will you forsake me too ?'

'My Lord,' said Hugo, 'I am less desperate than my brothers. You have much work upon your hands, and I can feel for you. When God shall please you will have leisure to attend to us.'

'By my soul,' Henry answered, 'you are one that I will never part with while I live.'

He sent workmen at once to Witham. Cells and chapel were duly built. The trouble finally passed away, and the Carthusian priory taking root became the English nursery of the order, which rapidly spread.

Hugo himself continued there for eleven years, leaving it from time to time on business of the Church, or summoned, as happened more and more frequently, to Henry's presence. The King, who had seen his value, who knew that he could depend upon him to speak the truth, consulted him on the most serious affairs of state, and beginning with respect, became

familiarly and ardently attached to him. Witham however remained his home, and he returned to it always as to a retreat of perfect enjoyment. His cell and his dole of weekly bread gave him as entire satisfaction as the most luxuriously furnished villa could afford to one of ourselves ; and long after, when he was called elsewhere, and the cares of the great world fell more heavily upon him, he looked to an annual month at Witham for rest of mind and body, and on coming there he would pitch away his grand dress and jump into his sheepskin as we moderns put on our shooting jackets.

While he remained Prior he lived in perfect simplicity and unbroken health of mind and body. The fame of his order spread fast, and with its light the inseparable shadow of superstition. Witham became a place of pilgrimage ; miracles were said to be worked by involuntary effluences from its occupants. Then and always Hugo thought little of miracles, turned his back on them for the most part, and discouraged them if not as illusions yet as matters of no consequence. St Paul thought one intelligible sentence containing truth in it was better than a hundred in an unknown tongue. The Prior of Witham considered that the only miracle worth speaking of was holiness of life. 'Little I,' writes Adam (*parvulus ego*), 'observed that he worked many miracles himself, but he paid no attention to them.' Thus he lived for eleven years with as much rational happiness as, in his opinion, human nature was capable of experiencing. When he lay down upon his horse-rug he slept like a child, undisturbed, save that at intervals, as if he was praying, he muttered a composed Amen. When he awoke he rose and went about his ordinary business : cleaning up dirt, washing dishes and such like, being his favourite early occupation.

The Powers, however—who, according to the Greeks, are jealous of human felicity—thought proper, in due time, to disturb the Prior of Witham. Towards the end of 1183 Walter de Coutances was promoted from the Bishopric of Lincoln to the Archbishopric of Rouen. The see lay vacant for two years and a half, and a successor had now to be provided. A great council was sitting at Ensham on business of the realm; the King riding over every morning from Woodstock. A deputation of canons from Lincoln came to learn his pleasure for the filling up the vacancy. The canons were directed to make a choice for themselves and were unable to agree, for the not unnatural reason that each canon considered the fittest person to be himself. Some one (Adam does not mention the name) suggested, as a way out of the difficulty, the election of Hugo of Witham. The canons being rich, well to do, and of the modern easy-going sort, laughed at the suggestion of the poor Carthusian. They found to their surprise, however, that the King was emphatically of the same opinion, and that Hugo and nobody else was the person that he intended for them.

The King's pleasure was theirs. They gave their votes, and despatched a deputation over the downs to command the Prior's instant presence at Ensham.

A difficulty rose where it was least expected. Not only was the 'Nolo episcopari' in Hugo's case a genuine feeling, not only did he regard worldly promotion as a thing not in the least attractive to him; but, in spite of his regard for Henry, he did not believe that the King was a proper person to nominate the prelates of the Church. He told the canons that the election was void. They must return to their own cathedral, call the chapter together, invoke the Holy Spirit, put the King of England out of their minds, and consider

rather the King of kings ; and so, and not otherwise, proceed with their choice.

The canons, wide-eyed with so unexpected a reception, retired with their answer. Whether they complied with the spirit of Hugo's direction may perhaps be doubted. They, however, assembled at Lincoln with the proper forms, and repeated the election with the external conditions which he had prescribed. As a last hope of escape he appealed to the Chartreuse, declaring himself unable to accept any office without orders from his superiors ; but the authorities there forbade him to decline ; and a fresh deputation of canons having come for his escort, he mounted his mule with a heavy heart and set out in their company for Winchester, where the King was then residing.

A glimpse of the party we are able to catch upon their journey. Though it was seven hundred years since, the English September was probably much like what it is at present, and the down country cannot have materially altered. The canons had their palfreys richly caparisoned with gilt saddle-cloths, and servants and sumpter horses. The Bishop elect strapped his wardrobe, his blanket and sheep-skin, at the back of his saddle. He rode in this way resisting remonstrance till close to Winchester, when the canons, afraid of the ridicule of the Court, slit the leathers without his knowing it, and passed his baggage to the servants.

Consecration and installation duly followed, and it was supposed that Hugo, a humble monk, owing his promotion to the King, would be becomingly grateful, that he would become just a Bishop, like anybody else, complying with established customs, moving in the regular route, and keeping the waters smooth.

All parties were disagreeably, or rather, as it turned out ultimately, agreeably, surprised. The first intima-

tion which he gave that he had a will of his own followed instantly upon his admission. Corruption or quasi-corruption had gathered already round ecclesiastical appointments. The Archdeacon of Canterbury put in a claim for consecration fees, things in themselves without meaning or justice, but implying that a bishopric was a prize, the lucky winner of which was expected to be generous.

The new prelate held no such estimate of the nature of his appointment—he said he would give as much for his cathedral as he had given for his mitre, and left the Archdeacon to his reflections.

No sooner was he established and had looked about him, than from the poor tenants of estates of the see he heard complaints of that most ancient of English grievances—the game laws. Hugo, who himself touched no meat, was not likely to have cared for the chase. He was informed that venison must be provided for his installation feast. He told his people to take from his park what was necessary—three hundred stags if they pleased, so little he cared for preserving them; but neither was he a man to have interfered needlessly with the recognized amusements of other people. There must have been a case of real oppression, or he would not have meddled with such things. The offender was no less a person than the head forester of the King himself. Hugo, failing to bring him to reason with mild methods, excommunicated him, and left him to carry his complaints to Henry. It happened that a rich stall was at the moment vacant at Lincoln. The King wanted it for one of his courtiers, and gave the Bishop an opportunity of redeeming his first offence by asking for it as a favour to himself. Henry was at Woodstock; the Bishop, at the moment, was at Dorchester, a place in his diocese

thirteen miles off. On receiving Henry's letter the Bishop bade the messenger carry back for answer that prebendal stalls were not for courtiers but for priests. The King must find other means of rewarding temporal services. Henry, with some experience of the pride of ecclesiastics, was unprepared for so abrupt a message—Becket himself had been less insolent—and as he had been personally kind to Hugo, he was hurt as well as offended. He sent again to desire him to come to Woodstock, and prepared, when he arrived, to show him that he was seriously displeased. Then followed one of the most singular scenes in English history—a thing veritably true, which oaks still standing in Woodstock Park may have witnessed. As soon as word was brought that the Bishop was at the park gate, Henry mounted his horse, rode with his retinue into a glade in the forest, where he alighted, sat down upon the ground with his people, and in this position prepared to receive the criminal. The Bishop approached—no one rose or spoke. He saluted the King; there was no answer. Pausing for a moment, he approached, pushed aside gently an earl who was sitting at Henry's side, and himself took his place. Silence still continued. At last Henry, looking up, called for a needle and thread; he had hurt a finger of his left hand. It was wrapped with a strip of linen rag, the end was loose, and he began to sew. The Bishop watched him through a few stitches, and then, with the utmost composure, said to him—‘*Quam similis es modo cognatis tuis de Falesiâ*’—‘your Highness now reminds me of your cousins of Falaise.’ The words sounded innocent enough—indeed, entirely unmeaning. Alone of the party, Henry understood the allusion; and, overwhelmed by the astonishing impertinence, he clenched his hands, struggled hard to contain himself,

and then rolled on the ground in convulsions of laughter.

‘Did you hear,’ he said to his people when at last he found words; ‘did you hear how this wretch insulted us? The blood of my ancestor the Conqueror, as you know, was none of the purest. His mother was of Falaise, which is famous for its leather work, and when this mocking gentleman saw me stitching my finger, he said I was showing my parentage.’

‘My good sir,’ he continued, turning to Hugo, ‘what do you mean by excommunicating my head forester, and when I make a small request of you, why is it that you not only do not come to see me, but do not send me so much as a civil answer?’

‘I know myself,’ answered Hugo, gravely, ‘to be indebted to your Highness for my late promotion. I considered that your Highness’s soul would be in danger if I was found wanting in the discharge of my duties; and therefore it was that I used the censures of the Church when I held them necessary, and that I resisted an improper attempt on your part upon a stall in my cathedral. To wait on you on such a subject I thought superfluous, since your Highness approves, as a matter of course, of whatever is rightly ordered in your realm.’

What could be done with such a Bishop? No one knew better than Henry the truth of what Hugo was saying, or the worth of such a man to himself. He bade Hugo proceed with the forester as he pleased. Hugo had him publicly whipped, then absolved him, and gave him his blessing, and found in him ever after a fast and faithful friend. The courtiers asked for no more stalls, and all was well.

In Church matters in his own diocese he equally took his own way. Nothing could be more unlike than

Hugo to the canons whom he found in possession ; yet he somehow bent them all to his will, or carried their wills with his own. 'Never since I came to the diocese,' he said to his chaplain, 'have I had a quarrel with my chapter. It is not that I am easy-going—*sum enim reverâ pipere mordacior* : pepper is not more biting than I can be. I often fly out for small causes ; but they take me as they find me. There is not one who distrusts my love for him, nor one by whom I do not believe myself to be loved.'

At table this hardest of monks was the most agreeable of companions. Though no one had practised abstinence more severe, no one less valued it for its own sake, or had less superstition or foolish sentiment about it. It was, and is, considered sacrilege in the Church of Rome to taste food before saying mass. Hugo, if he saw a priest who was to officiate exhausted for want of support, and likely to find a difficulty in getting through his work, would order him to eat as a point of duty, and lectured him for want of faith if he affected to be horrified.

Like all genuine men, the Bishop was an object of special attraction to children and animals. The little ones in every house that he entered were always found clinging about his legs. Of the attachment of other creatures to him, there was one very singular instance. About the time of his installation there appeared on the mere at Stow Manor, eight miles from Lincoln, a swan of unusual size, which drove the other male birds from off the water. Abbot Adam, who frequently saw the bird, says that he was curiously marked. The bill was saffron instead of black, with a saffron tint on the plumage of the head and neck ; and the Abbot adds, he was as much larger than other swans as a swan is larger than a goose. This bird, on the occasion of the

Bishop's first visit to the manor, was brought to him to be seen as a curiosity. He was usually unmanageable and savage ; but the Bishop knew the way to his heart ; fed him, and taught him to poke his head into the pockets of his frock to look for bread crumbs, which he did not fail to find there. Ever after he seemed to know instinctively when the Bishop was expected, flew trumpeting up and down the lake, slapping the water with his wings ; when the horses approached, he would march out upon the grass to meet them ; strutted at the Bishop's side, and would sometimes follow him upstairs.

It was a miracle of course to the general mind, though explicable enough to those who have observed the physical charm which men who take pains to understand animals are able to exercise over them.

To relate, or even to sketch, Bishop Hugo's public life in the fourteen years that he was at Lincoln, would be beyond the compass of a magazine article. The materials indeed do not exist ; for Abbot Adam's life is but a collection of anecdotes ; and out of them it is only possible here to select a few at random. King Henry died two years after the scene at Woodstock ; then came the accession of *Cœur de Lion*, the Crusade, the King's imprisonment in Austria, and the conspiracy of John. Glimpses can be caught of the Bishop in these stormy times quelling insurgent mobs —in Holland, perhaps Holland in Lincolnshire, with his brother William of Avalon, encountering a military insurrection ; single-handed and unarmed, overawing a rising at Northampton, when the citizens took possession of the great church, and swords were flashing, and his attendant chaplains fled terrified, and hid themselves behind the altars.

These things however, glad as we should be to

know more of them, the Abbot merely hints at, confining himself to subjects more interesting to the convent recluses for whose edification he was writing.

But in whatever circumstances he lets us see the Bishop, it is always the same simple, brave, unpretending, wise figure, one to whom nature had been lavish of her fairest gifts, and whose training, to modern eyes so unpromising, had brought out all that was best in him.

Among the most deadly disorders which at that time prevailed in England was leprosy. The wretched creatures afflicted with so loathsome a disease were regarded with a superstitious terror: as the objects in some special way of the wrath of God. They were outlawed from the fellowship of mankind, and left to perish in misery.

The Bishop, who had clearer views of the nature and causes of human suffering, established hospitals on his estate for these poor victims of undeserved misery, whose misfortunes appeared to him to demand special care and sympathy. To the horror of his attendants, he persisted in visiting them himself; he washed their sores with his own hands, kissed them, prayed over them, and consoled them.

‘Pardon, blessed Jesus,’ exclaims Adam, ‘the unhappy soul of him who tells the story! when I saw my master touch those bloated and livid faces; when I saw him kiss the bleared eyes or eyeless sockets, I shuddered with disgust. But Hugo said to me that these afflicted ones were flowers of Paradise, pearls in the coronet of the Eternal King waiting for the coming of their Lord, who in His own time would change their forlorn bodies into the likeness of His own glory.’

He never altered his own monastic habits. He never parted with his hair shirt, or varied from the

hardness of the Carthusian rule; but he refused to allow that it possessed any particular sanctity. Men of the world affected regret sometimes to him that they were held by duty to a secular life when they would have preferred to retire into a monastery. The kingdom of God, he used to answer, was not made up of monks and hermits. God, at the day of judgment, would not ask a man why he had not been a monk, but why he had not been a Christian. Charity in the heart, truth in the tongue, chastity in the body, were the virtues which God demanded: and chastity, to the astonishment of his clergy, he insisted, was to be found as well among the married as the unmarried. The wife was as honourable as the virgin. He allowed women (Adam's pen trembles as he records it) to sit at his side at dinner; and had been known to touch and even to embrace them. 'Woman,' he once said remarkably, 'has been admitted to a higher privilege than man. It has not been given to man to be the father of God. To woman it has been given to be God's mother.'

Another curious feature about him was his eagerness to be present, whenever possible, at the burial of the dead. He never allowed any one of his priests to bury a corpse if he were himself within reach. If a man had been good, he said, he deserved to be honoured. If he had been a sinner, there was the more reason to help him. He would allow nothing to interfere with a duty of this kind; and in great cities he would spend whole days by the side of graves. At Rouen once he was engaged to dinner with King Richard himself, and kept the King and the Court waiting for him while he was busy in the cemetery. A courtier came to fetch him. 'The King needn't wait,' he only said. 'Let him go to dinner in the name of God.'

Better the King dine without my company, than that I leave my Master's work undone.'

Gentle and affectionate as he shows himself in such traits as these, still, as he said, he was *pipere mordacior*—more biting than pepper. When there was occasion for anger there was fierce lightning in him; he was not afraid of the highest in the land.

The cause for which Becket died was no less dear to Hugo. On no pretext would he permit innovation on the Church's privileges, and he had many a sharp engagement with the primate, Archbishop Hubert, who was too complaisant to the secular power. An instance or two may be taken at random. There was a certain Richard de Wavre in his diocese, a younger son of a noble house, who was in deacon's orders, but the elder brother having died childless, was hoping to relapse into the lay estate. This Richard in some one of the many political quarrels of the day brought a charge of treason against Sir Reginald de Argentun, one of the Bishop's knights. As he was a clerk in orders the Bishop forbade him to appear as prosecutor in a secular court or cause. Cœur de Lion and Archbishop Hubert ordered him to go on. The Bishop suspended him for contumacy, the Archbishop removed the suspension. The Bishop pronounced sentence of excommunication; the Archbishop, as primate and legate, issued letters of absolution, which Richard flourished triumphantly in the Bishop's face.

'If my Lord Archbishop absolve you a hundred times,' was Hugo's answer, 'a hundred times I will excommunicate you again. Regard my judgment as you will, I hold you bound while you remain impenitent.' Death ended the dispute. The wretched Richard was murdered by one of his servants.

Another analogous exploit throws curious light on

the habits of the times. Riding once through St Albans he met the sheriff with the *posse comitatus* escorting a felon to the gallows. The prisoner threw himself before the Bishop and claimed protection. The Bishop reined in his horse and asked who the man was.

'My Lord,' said the sheriff shortly, 'it is no affair of yours; let us pass and do our duty.'

'Eh!' then said Hugo. 'Blessed be God; we will see about that; make over the man to me; and go back and tell the judges that I have taken him from you.'

'My lords judges,' he said, when they came to remonstrate, 'I need not remind you of the Church's privilege of sanctuary; understand that where the Bishop is, the Church is. He who can consecrate the sanctuary carries with him the sacredness of the sanctuary.'

The humiliation of an English king at Becket's tomb had been a lesson too severe and too recent to be forgotten. 'We may not dispute with you,' the judges replied; 'if you choose to let this man go we shall not oppose you, but you must answer for it to the King's Highness.'

'So be it,' answered Hugo, 'you have spoken well. I charge myself with your prisoner. The responsibility be mine.'

There was probably something more in the case than appears on the surface. The sanctuary system worked in mitigation of a law which in itself was frightfully cruel, and there may have been good reason why the life of the poor wretch should have been spared. The Bishop set him free. It is to be hoped that 'he sinned no more.'

The common-sense view which the Bishop took of miracles has been already spoken of, but we may give

one or two other illustrations of it. Doubtless, he did not disbelieve in the possibility of miracles, but he knew how much imposture passed current under the name, and whether true or false he never missed a chance of checking or affronting superstition.

Stopping once in a country town on a journey from Paris to Troyes, he invited the parish priest to dine with him. The priest declined, but came in the evening to sit and talk with the chaplains. He was a lean old man, dry and shrivelled to the bones, and he told them a marvellous story which he bade them report to their master.

Long ago, he said, when he was first ordained priest, he fell into mortal sin, and without having confessed or done penance he had presumed to officiate at the altar. He was sceptical too, it seemed, a premature Voltairian. 'Is it credible,' he had said to himself when consecrating the host, 'that I, a miserable sinner, can manufacture and handle and eat the body and blood of God?' He was breaking the wafer at the moment; blood flowed at the fracture—the part which was in his hand became flesh. He dropped it terrified into the chalice, and the wine turned instantly into blood. The precious things were preserved. The priest went to Rome, confessed to the Pope himself, and received absolution. The faithful now flocked from all parts of France to adore the mysterious substances which were to be seen in the parish church; and the priest trusted that he might be honoured on the following day by the presence of Bishop Hugo and his retinue.

The chaplains rushed to the Bishop open-mouthed, eager to be allowed to refresh their souls on so divine a spectacle.

'In the name of God,' he said quietly, 'let un-

lievers go rushing after signs and wonders. What have we to do with such things who partake every day of the heavenly sacrifice? He dismissed the Priest with his blessing, giving him the benefit of a doubt, though he probably suspected him to be a rogue, and forbade his chaplains most strictly to yield to idle curiosity.

He was naturally extremely humorous, and humour in such men will show itself sometimes in playing with things, in the sacredness of which they may believe fully notwithstanding. It has been said, indeed, that no one has any real faith if he cannot afford to play with it.

Among the relics at Fécamp, in Normandy, was a so-called bone of Mary Magdalene. This precious jewel was kept with jealous care. It was deposited in a case, and within the case was double wrapped in silk. Bishop Hugo was taken to look at it in the presence of a crowd of monks, abbots, and other dignitaries; mass had been said first as a preparation; the thing was then taken out of its box and exhibited, so far it could be seen through its envelope. The Bishop asked to look at the bone itself; and no one venturing to touch it, he borrowed a knife and calmly slit the covering. He took it up, whatever it may have been, gazed at it, raised it to his lips as if to kiss it, and then suddenly with a strong grip of his teeth bit a morsel out of its side. A shriek of sacrilege rang through the church. Looking round quietly the Bishop said, 'Just now we were handling in our unworthy fingers the body of the Holy One of all. We passed Him between our teeth and down into our stomach; why may we not do the like with the members of his saints?'

• We have left to the last the most curious of all the

stories connected with this singular man. We have seen him with King Henry ; we will now follow him into the presence of *Cœur de Lion*.

Richard, it will be remembered, on his return from his captivity plunged into war with Philip of France, carrying out a quarrel which had commenced in the Holy Land. The King, in distress for money, had played tricks with Church patronage which Hugo had firmly resisted. Afterwards an old claim on Lincoln diocese for some annual services was suddenly revived, which had been pretermitted for sixty years. The arrears for all that time were called for and exacted, and the clergy had to raise among themselves 3000 marks : hard measure of this kind perhaps induced Hugo to look closely into further demands.

In 1197, when Richard was in Normandy, a pressing message came home from him for supplies. A council was held at Oxford, when Archbishop Hubert, who was Chancellor, required each prelate and great nobleman in the King's name to provide three hundred knights at his own cost to serve in the war. The Bishop of London supported the primate. The Bishop of Lincoln followed. Being a stranger, he said, and ignorant on his arrival of English laws, he had made it his business to study them. The see of Lincoln, he was aware, was bound to military service, but it was service in England and not abroad. The demand of the King was against the liberties which he had sworn to defend, and he would rather die than betray them.

The Bishop of Salisbury, gathering courage from Hugo's resistance, took the same side. The council broke up in confusion, and the Archbishop wrote to Richard to say that he was unable to raise the required force, and that the Bishop of Lincoln was the cause.

Richard, who, with most noble qualities, had the temper of a fiend, replied instantly with an order to seize and confiscate the property of the rebellious prelates. The Bishop of Salisbury was brought upon his knees, but Hugo, fearless as ever, swore that he would excommunicate any man who dared to execute the King's command ; and as it was known that he would keep his word, the royal officers hesitated to act. The King wrote a second time more fiercely, threatening death if they disobeyed, and the Bishop, not wishing to expose them to trouble on his account, determined to go over and encounter the tempest in person.

At Rouen, on his way to Roche d'Andeli, where Richard was lying, he was encountered by the Earl Marshal and Lord Albemarle, who implored him to send some conciliatory message by them, as the King was so furious that they feared he might provoke the anger of God by some violent act.

The Bishop declined their assistance. He desired them merely to tell the King that he was coming. They hurried back, and he followed at his leisure. The scene that ensued was even stranger than the interview already described with Henry in the park at Woodstock.

Cœur de Lion, when he arrived at Roche d'Andeli, was hearing mass in the church. He was sitting in a great chair at the opening into the choir, with the Bishops of Durham and Ely on either side. Church ceremonials must have been conducted with less stiff propriety than at present. Hugo advanced calmly and made the usual obeisance. Richard said nothing, but frowned, looked sternly at him for a moment, and turned away.

'Kiss me, my Lord King,' said the Bishop. It was the ordinary greeting between the sovereign and

the spiritual peers. The King averted his face still further.

'Kiss me, my Lord,' said Hugo again, and he caught Cœur de Lion by the vest and shook him, Abbot Adam standing shivering behind.

'Non meruisti—thou hast not deserved it,' growled Richard.

'I have deserved it,' replied Hugo, and shook him harder.

Had he shown fear, Cœur de Lion would probably have trampled on him, but who could resist such marvellous audacity? The kiss was given. The Bishop passed up to the altar and became absorbed in the service, Cœur de Lion curiously watching him.

When mass was over there was a formal audience, but the result of it was decided already. Hugo declared his loyalty in everything, save what touched his duty to God. The King yielded, and threw the blame of the quarrel on the too complaisant primate.

Even this was not all. The Bishop afterwards requested a private interview. He told Richard solemnly that he was uneasy for his soul, and admonished him, if he had anything on his conscience, to confess it.

The King said he was conscious of no sin, save of a certain rage against his French enemies.

'Obey God!' the Bishop said, 'and God will humble your enemies for you—and you for your part take heed you offend not Him or hurt your neighbour. I speak in sadness, but rumour says you are unfaithful to your queen.'

The lion was tamed for the moment. The King acknowledged nothing but restrained his passion, only observing afterwards, 'If all bishops were like my Lord of Lincoln, not a prince among us could lift his head against them.'

The trouble was not over. Hugo returned to England to find his diocese in confusion. A bailiff of the Earl of Leicester had taken a man out of sanctuary in Lincoln and had hung him. Instant excommunication followed. The Bishop compelled every one who had been concerned in the sacrilege to repair, stripped naked to the waist, to the spot where the body was buried, to dig it up, putrid as it was, and carry it on their shoulders round the town, to halt at each church door to be flogged by the priests belonging to the place, and then with their own hands to rebury the man in the cemetery from which he had been originally carried off.

Fresh demands for money in another, but no less irregular, form followed from the King. There was again a council in London. The Archbishop insisted that Hugo should levy a subsidy upon his clergy.

'Do you not know, my Lord,' the primate said, 'that the King is as thirsty for money as a man with the dropsy for water?'

'His Majesty may be dropsical for all that I know,' Hugo answered, 'but I will not be the water for him to swallow.'

Once more he started for Normandy, but not a second time to try the effect of his presence on Cœur de Lion. On approaching Angers he was met by Sir Gilbert de Lacy with the news that the Lion-heart was cold. Richard had been struck by an arrow in the trenches at Chaluz. The wound had mortified and he was dead. He was to be buried at Fontevrault, but the country was in the wildest confusion. The roads were patrolled by banditti, and de Lacy strongly advised the Bishop to proceed no further.

Hugo's estimate of danger was unlike de Lacy's. 'I have more fear,' he said, 'of failing through cowardice in my duty to my lord and prince. If the thieves

take my horse and clothes from me, I can walk, and walk the lighter. If they tie me fast, I cannot help myself.'

Paying a brief visit to Queen Berengaria, at Beaufort Abbey, on the way, he reached Fontevrault on Palm Sunday, the day of the funeral, and was in time to pay the last honours to the sovereign whom he had defied and yet loved so dearly.

His own time was also nearly out, and this hurried sketch must also haste to its end. One more scene, however, remains to be described.

To Henry and Richard, notwithstanding their many faults, the Bishop was ardently attached. For their sakes, and for his country's, he did what lay in him to influence for good the brother who was to succeed to the throne.

At the time of Richard's death, John was with his nephew Arthur in Brittany. That John and not Arthur must take Richard's place the Bishop seems to have assumed as unavoidable; Arthur was but ten years old and the times were too rough for a regency. John made haste to Fontevrault, receiving on his way the allegiance of many of the barons. After the funeral he made a profusion of promises to the Bishop of Lincoln as to his future conduct.

The Bishop had no liking for John. He knew him to have been paltry, false, and selfish.

'I trust you mean what you say,' he said in reply. 'Nostis quia satis aversor mendacium,—you know that I hate lying.'

John produced an amulet which he wore round his neck with a chain. That he seemed to think would help him to walk straight.

The Bishop looked at it scornfully. 'Do you trust in a senseless stone?' he said. 'Trust in the living rock in heaven—the Lord Jesus Christ. Anchor your hopes in Him and He will direct you.'

On one side of the church at Fontevrault was a celebrated sculpture of the day of judgment. The Judge was on his throne; on his left were a group of crowned kings led away by devils to be hurled into the smoking pit. Hugo pointed significantly to them. 'Understand,' he said, 'that those men are going into unending torture. Think of it, and let your wisdom teach you the prospects of princes who, while they govern men, are unable to rule themselves, and become slaves in hell through eternity. Fear this, I say, while there is time. The hour will come when it will have been too late.'

John affected to smile, pointed to the good kings on the other side, and declared, with infinite volubility, that he would be found one of those.

The fool's nature, however, soon showed itself. Hugo took leave of him with a foreboding heart, paid one more bright brief visit in the following year to his birthplace in the south, and then returned to England to die. He had held his see but fourteen years, and was no more than sixty-five. His asceticism had not impaired his strength. At his last visit to the Chartreuse he had distanced all his companions on the steep hill-side, but illness overtook him on his way home. He arrived in London, at his house in the Old Temple, in the middle of September, to feel that he was rapidly dying. Of death itself, it is needless to say, he had no kind of fear. 'By the holy nut,' he used to say, in his queer way ('per sanctam nucem,¹ sic enim vice juramenti ad formationem verbi interdum loquebatur'), 'by the holy nut, we should be worse off if we were not allowed to die at all.'

He prepared with his unvarying composure. As his

¹ Perhaps for 'crucem,' as we say 'by *Gad*,' to avoid the actual word.

illness increased, and he was confined to his bed, his hair shirt hurt him. Twisting into knots, as he shifted from side to side, it bruised and wounded his skin. The rules of the order would have allowed him to dispense with it, but he could not be induced to let it go ; but he took animal food, which the doctor prescribed as good for him, and quietly and kindly submitted to whatever else was ordered for him. He knew, however, that his life was over, and with constant confession held himself ready for the change. Great people came about him. John himself came ; but he received him coldly. Archbishop Hubert came once ; he did not care, perhaps, to return a second time.

The Archbishop, sitting by his bed, after the usual condolences, suggested that the Bishop of Lincoln might like to use the opportunity to repent of any sharp expressions which he had occasionally been betrayed into using. As the hint was not taken, he referred especially to himself as one of those who had something to complain of.

‘Indeed, your Grace,’ replied Hugo, ‘there have been passages of words between us, and I have much to regret in relation to them. It is not, however, what I have said to your Grace, but what I have omitted to say. I have more feared to offend your Grace than to offend my Father in heaven. I have withheld words which I ought to have spoken, and I have thus sinned against your Grace and desire your forgiveness. Should it please God to spare my life I purpose to amend that fault.’

As his time drew near, he gave directions for the disposition of his body, named the place in Lincoln Cathedral where he was to be buried, and bade his chaplain make a cross of ashes on the floor of his room, lift him from his bed at the moment of departure, and place him upon it.

It was a November afternoon. The choristers of St Paul's were sent for to chant the compline to him for the last time. He gave a sign when they were half way through. They lifted him and laid him on the ashes. The choristers sang on, and as they began the *Nunc Dimittis* he died.

So parted one of the most beautiful spirits that was ever incarnated in human clay. Never was man more widely mourned over, or more honoured in his death. He was taken down to Lincoln, and the highest and the lowest alike had poured out to meet the body. A company of poor Jews, the offscouring of mankind, for whom rack and gridiron were considered generally too easy couches, came to mourn over one whose justice had sheltered even them.

John was at Lincoln at the time, and William of Scotland with him; and on the hill, a mile from the town, two kings, three archbishops, fourteen bishops, a hundred abbots, and as many earls and barons, were waiting to receive the sad procession.

King John and the archbishops took the bier upon their shoulders, and waded knee-deep through the mud to the cathedral. The King of Scotland stood apart in tears.

It was no vain pomp or unmeaning ceremony, but the genuine healthful recognition of human worth. The story of Hugo of Lincoln has been too long unknown to us. It deserves a place in every biography of English Worthies. It ought to be familiar to every English boy. Such men as he were the true builders of our nation's greatness. Like the 'well-tempered mortar' in old English walls, which is hard as the stone itself, their actions and their thoughts are the cement of our national organization, and bind together yet such parts of it as still are allowed to stand.

FATHER NEWMAN ON 'THE GRAMMAR OF ASSENT.'¹

THIRTY years ago, when the tendencies Romewards of the English High Churchmen were first becoming visible, Dr Arnold expressed his own opinion of the reasonableness of the movement in the brief sentence, 'Believe in the Pope! I would as soon believe in Jupiter.' Whether belief in Jupiter may hereafter become possible, time will show. Necromancy has been revived in spirit-rapping. We have converts to Islam among us, and England is the chosen recruiting ground of the Mormon Apostles; while this book before us is an attempt on the part of one of the ablest of living men, to prove that there is no reasonable standing ground between Atheism and submission to the Holy See—submission not outwardly only, or partially, or conditionally, as to an authority which has historical claims upon us, and may possibly or probably deserve our allegiance; but submission complete and entire, the unreserved resignation of our moral and spiritual intelligence. The Church of Rome, and indeed all religious dogmatic systems, are not content with insisting that there is a high probability in their

¹ *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent.* By John Henry Newman, D.D., of the Oratory. London: Burns, Oates & Co. 1870.

favour. They call themselves infallible. They demand on our part an absolute certainty that they are right, and although they disagree among themselves and cannot all be right, and although points on which those competent to form an opinion differ, in all other things we agree to hold doubtful, they tell us that doubt is a sin, that we can be and ought to be entirely certain, that a complete and utter acquiescence which excludes the possibility of mistake, is a frame of mind at once possible and philosophically just.

It is this seeming paradox which Dr Newman undertakes to prove. His book is composed with elaborate art, which is the more striking the more frequently we peruse it. Every line, every word tells, from the opening sentence to the last.

His object, from the beginning to the end, is to combat and overthrow the position of Locke, that reasonable assent is proportioned to evidence, and in its nature, therefore, admits of degrees.

He commences with an analysis of the elementary mental processes. He divides 'assent' into 'notional' and 'real.' He calls notional 'assent' that which we give to general propositions, scientific, literary, or philosophical; real assent, the conclusions which we form in matters of fact, either in our sensible perceptions, or in the application of principles to details. He professes to show how, from our intellectual constitution, we are unable to rest in probabilities, and rightly or wrongly pass on to a sensation of certainty; how, notwithstanding exceptions which cannot wholly be got over, the conviction that we have hold of the truth is an evidence to us that we have hold of it in reality. Our beliefs are borne in upon our minds, we know not how, directly, indirectly, by reason, by experience, by emotion, imagination, and all the count-

less parts of our complicated nature. We may not be able to analyze the grounds of our faith, but the faith is none the less justifiable. And thus, after being led by the hand through an intricate series of mental phenomena, we are landed in the Catholic religion as the body of truth which completely commends itself to the undistorted intellectual perception.

The argument is extremely subtle, and often difficult to follow, but the difficulty is in the subject rather than in the treatment. Dr Newman has watched and analyzed the processes of the mind with as much care and minuteness as Ehrenberg the organization of animalculæ. The knotted and tangled skein is disengaged and combed out till every fibre of it can be taken up separately and examined at leisure; while all along, hints are let fall from time to time, expressions, seemingly casual, illustrations, or notices of emotional peculiarities, every one of which has its purpose, and, to the careful reader, is a sign-post of the road on which he is travelling.

Yet we never read a book, unless the *Ethics* of Spinoza be an exception, which is less convincing in proportion to its ability. You feel that you are in the hands of a thinker of the very highest powers; yet they are the powers rather of an intellectual conjuror than of a teacher who commands your confidence. You are astonished at the skill which is displayed, and unable to explain away the results; but you are conscious all the time that you are played with; you are perplexed but you are not attracted; and unless you bring a Catholic conclusion ready made with you to the study, you certainly will not arrive at it. For it is not a simple acknowledgment that Catholicism may perhaps be true that is required of us, or even that it is probably true, and that a reasonable person might

see cause for joining the Roman communion. This is not conviction at all, nor is it related in any way to a religious frame of mind. We are expected rather to feel Catholicism to be absolutely necessary and completely true—true, not as an inference from argument, but as imposed by a spiritual command—true, in a sense which allows no possibility of error, and cannot and ought not to endure contradiction. ‘The highest opinion of Protestants in religion,’ he says, ‘is, generally speaking, assent to a probability, as even Butler has been understood or misunderstood to teach, and therefore consistent with the toleration of its contradictory.’ The creed, therefore, which we are to accept is the Romanism with which we are familiar in history; persecuting from the necessity of the case, for it cannot, where it has the power, permit opposition. No heterodox opinion can be borne with, or be even heard in its own defence. ‘Since mere argument,’ Father Newman says elsewhere, ‘is not the measure of assent, no one can be called certain of a proposition whose mind does not spontaneously and promptly reject on their first suggestion, as idle, as impertinent, as sophistical, any objections which are directed against its truth. No man is certain of a truth who can endure the thought of its contradictory existing or occurring, and that not from any set purpose or effort to reject it, but, as I have said, by the spontaneous action of the intellect. What is contradictory to it with its apparatus of argument, fades out of the mind as fast as it enters it.’

We are familiar with this mode of thought, but it is not characteristic of intelligent persons. The Irish magistrate having listened to one side of a question declared himself satisfied; he had heard enough, he said, and anything further was either superfluous or

perplexed his judgment. In a criminal trial, when the facts have been known and discussed beforehand, both judge and jury, from the constitution of their minds, must have formed an opinion on the merits of the case, which must have amounted often to certainty ; but when the prisoner comes before them it becomes their duty to dismiss out of their minds every pre-possession which they may have entertained. Instead of rejecting suggestions inconsistent with such pre-possessions they are bound to welcome them, and to look for them, with the most scrupulous impartiality. The man of science is unworthy of his name if he disdains to listen to objections to a favourite theory. It is through a conviction of the inadequacy of all formulas to cover the facts of nature, it is by a constant recollection of the fallibility of the best-instructed intelligence, and by an unintermittent scepticism which goes out of its way to look for difficulties, that scientific progress has been made possible. So long as Father Newman's method prevailed in Europe, every branch of practical knowledge was doomed to barrenness. Why are we to fall back upon it now, in the one department in which, according to theologians, error is most dangerous ?

To give a sketch of his argument.

We entertain propositions, he tells us, in three ways —we doubt, we draw inferences, and we assent. Doubt is, of course, the opposite of certainty. Inferences being from premises to conclusions are still conditional, for our premises may be incorrect or inadequate. Assent, on the other hand, is in its nature unconditional ; it means that we are quite certain, and know that we cannot be wrong.

We assent notionally when we accept a general proposition as undoubtedly true, as that the whole is

greater than its part, or that the planets move in ellipses, or again, when we read a book and intellectually go along with its meaning without personally or particularly applying it. We assent really to anything which comes home in detail to our feelings or our senses, and is directly recognized as true by ourselves. Dr Newman gives a beautiful illustration :

Let us consider, too, how differently young and old are affected by the words of some classic author, such as Homer or Horace. Passages, which to a boy are but rhetorical commonplaces, neither better nor worse than a hundred others which any clever writer might supply, which he gets by heart and thinks very fine, and imitates, as he thinks, successfully, in his own flowing versification, at length come home to him, when long years have passed, and he has had experience of life, and pierce him as if he had never before known them, with their sad earnestness and vivid exactness. Then he comes to understand how it is that lines, the birth of some chance morning or evening at an Ionic festival, or among the Sabine hills, have lasted generation after generation, for thousands of years, with a power over the mind, and a charm, which the current literature of his own day, with all its obvious advantages, is utterly unable to rival.

The history, the occupations, the studies of every man provide him with a multitude of assents of this kind. Proverbs become as it were realized when we feel the application of them. Opinions taken up as notions acquire the stamp of certainty, and men are only properly themselves when their thoughts thus acquire stability and they are no longer blown about by gusts of argument. Then only they learn to step out firmly with confidence and self-reliance.

Assents, Dr Newman repeats, differ in kind from inferences. We may infer from observation the probable existence of an intelligent Creator, but we are still far from the conviction which is required for practical service, and life is not long enough for a religion built on speculative conclusions. Life is for action. We cannot wait for proof or we shall never

begin to obey. 'If we insist on proof for everything we shall never come to action. . . To act we must assume, and that assumption is faith. . . . If we commence with scientific knowledge and argumentative proof, or lay any great stress upon it as the basis of personal Christianity, or attempt to make men moral or religious by libraries and museums, let us in consistency take chemists for our cooks and mineralogists for our masons.'

This is perfectly true as regards individual persons. The clerk in Eastcheap, as Mr Carlyle says, cannot be for ever verifying his ready reckoner. Yet the conclusions on which we act are nevertheless resting on producible evidence somewhere, if we cannot each of us produce it ourselves. They are the results of past experience and intellectual thought, which are tested, enlarged, or modified by the practice of successive generations. We accept them confidently, not from any internal conviction that they are necessarily true, but from an inference of another kind, that if not true they would have been disproved. The believer at first hand can always give a reason for the faith that is in him. He believes, and he knows why he believes, and he can produce his reasons in a form which shall be convincing to others. The believer at second hand believes in his teacher, and can give a reason for regarding that teacher as an authority. The mason need not himself be a mineralogist, but if the master builder who employs him knows nothing of the properties of stone, his labour will be thrown away. The cook inherits the traditional rules of his art, but if he introduces novelties in food he must either call in the chemist to advise him, or he will try his experiments at the risk of our lives.

We have not yet reached a point where we differ from Father Newman essentially; but we are already

on our guard against his method. His aim is to make us acknowledge that in common things we feel a certainty disproportioned to the evidence which can be produced to justify it. It appears to us, on the contrary, that Locke's position remains unshaken; that every sound conviction which we have can be traced ultimately to experience, and that the tenacity with which we hold it is, or ought to be, proportioned to the uniformity of that experience.

From real assents in general we pass to assents in matters of religion.

'What is a dogma of faith?' Father Newman asks, 'and what is to believe it? A dogma is a proposition. It stands for a notion or a thing, and to believe it is to give the assent of the mind to it as standing for one or the other. To give a real assent to it is an act of religion; to give a notional is a theological act. It is discerned, rested in, and appropriated as a reality by the religious imagination. It is held as a truth by the theological intellect.'

The first of such dogmas or propositions contains 'belief in God.' Father Newman disclaims necessarily the intention of proving the reasonableness of this belief. He denies belief to be the result of argument, and therefore he will not argue. He proposes rather to investigate the mental process which the words 'I believe in God' imply. Yet he cannot escape from the conditions of human thought; and while he will not allow belief to be an inference, he argues like anybody else that it follows irresistibly from the phenomena of our nature. Nowhere in the English language will be found the reasons for believing in a moral power as the supreme ruling force in the universe, drawn out more clearly or more persuasively. There are no gratuitous assumptions—no appeals to the imagination. He lays

the facts of personal experience before us : he indicates the conclusion at which they point : and when the conclusion is conceded, the obligations of obedience follow. He draws the inference though he will not allow it to be an inference. 'Inference,' he seems to say, 'has no power of persuasion and involves no duties.' Inference is but a graduated probability, and involves the toleration of an opposite opinion. But probability, as Butler says, is the guide of our lives, and may involve duties as completely as certainty. Has a child no duties to his father because it is possible, though infinitely unlikely, that his mother may have been unfaithful to her vows ?

The argument itself stands thus. We regret to do injustice by compression to its singular lucidity.

'Can we,' Father Newman asks, 'give a real assent to the proposition that there is one God—not an *anima mundi* merely or an initial force, but God as the word is understood by the Theist and the Christian, a personal God, the Author and Sustainer of all things—the Moral Governor of the world ?' He says that we can, and that we can be certain of it—that it is a truth which every reasonable person is able and ought to acknowledge. He does not look for what has been called scornfully 'a clock-making Divinity.' The evidences of a contriving intellect in nature, of the adaptation of means to ends, weigh but little with him. There is no morality in the physical constitution of things. The elements know nothing of good and evil ; and we can arrive on this road only at a power adequate to the effects which we witness. The water will not rise higher than its source. The created world is finite, and can tell us nothing of an Infinite Creator. The root of religious belief lies in the conscience and in the sense of moral obligation.

I assume (says Father Newman) that Conscience has a legitimate place among our mental acts; as really so as the action of memory, of reasoning, of imagination, or as the sense of the beautiful; that, as there are objects which, when presented to the mind, cause it to feel grief, regret, joy, or desire, so there are things which excite in us approbation or blame, and which we in consequence call right or wrong; and which, experienced in ourselves, kindle in us the specific sense of pleasure or pain, which goes by the name of a good or bad conscience. This being taken for granted, I shall attempt to show that in this special feeling, which follows on the commission of what we call right and wrong, lie the materials for the real apprehension of a Divine Sovereign and Judge.

The feeling of conscience being, I repeat, a certain keen sensibility, pleasant or painful,—self-approval and hope, or compunction and fear,—attendant on certain of our actions, which in consequence we call right or wrong, is twofold:—it is a moral sense, and a sense of duty; a judgment of the reason and a magisterial dictate.

Conscience, it is evident, does not furnish a rule of right conduct. It has sometimes been the sanction of crime. Sometimes it is at a loss to decide. Sometimes it gives contradictory answers. Conscience made St Paul into a persecutor. Conscience has made kings into tyrants, and subjects into rebels. It is not a rule of right conduct, but it is a sanction of right conduct. It assures us that there is such a thing as right, and that when we know what it is we are bound to do it. ‘Half the world would be puzzled to know what is meant by the moral sense, but every one knows what is meant by a good or bad conscience. Conscience is ever forcing on us by threats and by promises, that we must follow the right and avoid the wrong: so far it is one and the same in the mind of every one, whatever be its particular errors in particular minds as to the acts which it orders to be done or to be avoided. . . . It does not repose in itself like the sense of beauty. . . . It vaguely reaches forward to something beyond self, and dimly discerns a sanction higher than self for its decisions, as evidenced in that keen sense of obligation and responsibility which

informs them. And hence it is that we are accustomed to speak of conscience as a voice, a term which we never should think of applying to the sense of the beautiful: and moreover a voice or the echo of a voice imperative and constraining, like no other dictate in the whole of our experience.'

Now what does this imply? Father Newman introduces a subtle distinction of which we hesitate to acknowledge the force. Conscience, he says, differs from the intellectual senses, from common sense, from taste, from sense of expedience, and the like, in being always 'emotional.' 'Affections are correlative with persons, and always involve the recognition of a living object towards which they are directed.' This is to infer too much; there is such a thing as love of good for its own sake. But leaving refinements and looking at these phenomena as facts of experience, they seem to us to carry Father Newman's main conclusion with them. The presence of a moral sense in ourselves presumes a moral nature in the power which has called us into existence. It is impossible to conceive, as Mr Carlyle says, 'that these high faculties should have been put into us by a Being that had none of its own.'

Father Newman continues :

If, as is the case, we feel responsibility, are ashamed, are frightened, at transgressing the voice of conscience, this implies that there is One to whom we are responsible, before whom we are ashamed, whose claims upon us we fear. If, on doing wrong, we feel the same tearful, broken-hearted sorrow which overwhelms us on hurting a mother; if, on doing right, we enjoy the same sunny serenity of mind, the same soothing, satisfactory delight which follows on our receiving praise from a father, we certainly have within us the image of some person, to whom our love and veneration look, in whose smile we find our happiness, for whom we yearn, towards whom we direct our pleadings, in whose anger we are troubled and waste away. These feelings in us are such as require for their exciting cause an intelligent being: we are not affectionate towards a stone, nor do we

feel shame before a horse or a dog ; we have no remorse or compunction on breaking mere human law ; yet, so it is, conscience excites all these painful emotions, confusion, foreboding, self-condemnation ; and, on the other hand, it sheds upon us a deep peace, a sense of security, a resignation, and a hope, which there is no sensible, no earthly object to elicit. ' The wicked flees, when no one pursueth ; then why does he flee ? whence his terror ? Who is it that he sees in solitude, in darkness, in the hidden chambers of his heart ? If the cause of these emotions does not belong to this visible world, the Object to which his perception is directed must be Supernatural and Divine ; and thus the phenomena of Conscience, as a dictate, avail to impress the imagination with the picture of a Supreme Governor, a Judge, holy, just, powerful, all-seeing, retributive, and is the creative principle of religion, as the moral sense is the principle of ethics.

As it is here that our acquiescence in Father Newman's reasoning comes to an end, and we henceforth part company with him, we add one more extract on the same subject, an illustration of the growth of religious feeling, from the history of the mind of a child :

The child keenly understands that there is a difference between right and wrong ; and when he has done what he believes to be wrong, he is conscious that he is offending One to whom he is amenable, whom he does not see, who sees him. His mind reaches forward with a strong presentiment to the thought of a Moral Governor, sovereign over him, mindful, and just. It comes to him like an impulse of nature to entertain it.

It is my wish to take an ordinary child, but one who is safe from influences destructive of his religious instincts. Supposing he has offended his parents, he will all alone and without effort, as if it were the most natural of acts, place himself in the presence of God, and beg of Him to set him right with them. Let us consider how much is contained in this simple act. First, it involves the impression on his mind of an unseen Being with whom he is in immediate relation, and that relation so familiar that he can address Him whenever he himself chooses ; next, of One whose goodwill towards him he is assured of, and can take for granted—nay, who loves him better, and is nearer to him, than his parents ; further, of One who can bear him, wherever he happens to be, and who can read his thoughts, for his prayer need not be vocal ; lastly, of One who can effect a critical change in the state of feeling of others towards him. That is, we shall not be wrong in holding that this child has in his mind the image of an Invisible Being, who exercises a particular providence among us, who is present everywhere, who is heart-reading, heart-changing, ever-accessible, open to impetration. What a strong and

intimate vision of God must he have already attained, if, as I have supposed, an ordinary trouble of mind has the spontaneous effect of leading him for consolation and aid to an Invisible Personal Power.

Moreover, this image brought before his mental vision is the image of One who by implicit threat and promise commands certain things which he, the same child, coincidently, by the same act of his mind approves ; which receives the adhesion of his moral sense and judgment as right and good. It is the image of One who is good, inasmuch as enjoining and enforcing what is right and good, and who, in consequence, not only excites in the child hope and fear—nay (it may be added), gratitude towards Him, as giving a law and maintaining it by reward and punishment,—but kindles in him love towards Him, as giving Him a good law, and therefore as being good Himself, for it is the property of goodness to kindle love, or rather the very object of love is goodness ; and all those distinct elements of the moral law, which the typical child, whom I am supposing, more or less consciously loves and approves,—truth, purity, justice, kindness, and the like,—are but shapes and aspects of goodness. And having in his degree a sensibility towards them all, for the sake of them all he is moved to love the Lawgiver, who enjoins them upon him. And, as he can contemplate these qualities and their manifestations under the common name of goodness, he is prepared to think of them as indivisible, correlative, supplementary of each other in one and the same Personality, so that there is no aspect of goodness which God is not ; and that the more, because the notion of a perfection embracing all possible excellences, both moral and intellectual, is especially congenial to the mind, and there are in fact intellectual attributes, as well as moral, included in the child's image of God, as above represented.

Such is the apprehension which even a child may have of his Sovereign, Lawgiver, and Judge ; which is possible in the case of children, because, at least, some children possess it, whether others possess it or no ; and which, when it is found in children, is found to act promptly and keenly, by reason of the paucity of their ideas. It is an image of the good God, good in Himself, good relatively to the child, with whatever incompleteness ; an image before it has been reflected on, and before it is recognized by him as a notion. Though he cannot explain or define the word 'God,' when told to use it, his acts show that to him it is far more than a word. He listens, indeed, with wonder and interest to fables or tales ; he has a dim, shadowy sense of what he hears about persons and matters of this world ; but he has that within him which actually vibrates, responds, and gives a deep meaning to the lessons of his first teachers about the will and the providence of God.

So far, with some differences which are perhaps but differences of nomenclature, we have gone heartily along with Father Newman. His book is a counter-

part to Butler's *Analogy*, and as the first part of the *Analogy* has been in these bad times a support to many of us, when the formulas of the established creeds have crumbled away, so we give cordial welcome to this addition to our stock of religious philosophy, which addresses itself to the intellect of the nineteenth century as Butler addressed that of its predecessor. But just as with Butler, when we pass from his treatment of the facts of nature to the defence of the dogmatic system of Christianity, we exchange the philosopher for the special pleader, so Father Newman at the same transition point equally ceases to convince. Assumption takes the place of reasoning. Facts are no longer looked in the face, and objections are either ignored altogether or are caricatured in order to be answered. Hitherto he has been pleading the cause of religion as it has existed in all ages and under countless varieties of form. We are now led across the morasses of technical theology. We spring from tuft to tuft and hummock to hummock. The ground shakes about us, and we are allowed no breathing time to pause, lest it give way under our feet altogether. The promised land lies before us, the land of absolute repose in the decisions of the Infallible Church. Once there we may rest for ever; and we are swung along towards it, guided, if we may use the word for an absolute surrender of reason, by the obscure emotions and half-realized perceptions of what is called the imaginative intellect. We leave behind us as misleading the apparatus of faculties which conduct us successfully through ordinary life. We are told to believe, and accept it on Father Newman's authority, that we are not after all chasing a will-o'-the-wisp, and that the other side to which he points the way is really solid ground, and not a mere fog-bank.

There are two roads on which it is possible to travel, after starting from conscience and the acknowledgment of a God to whom we owe obedience. There is the theological road, and there is the road of experience and fact. To those who choose the second of these courses conscience is the sanction of right action ; while experience and observation show us in what right action consists. The moral laws are inherent in nature like the laws of the material universe, and our business is to discover what they are. If we obey them, it is well with us ; if we disobey them we fail, and ruin ourselves internally in our characters, and sooner or later in our external fortunes. These laws are not arbitrarily imposed from without, but are inter-fused in the constitution of things. Conscience insists that they must be obeyed, for they form the condition on which society holds together, and in obedience to them lies the essence of all genuine religion.

From this point of view the religious history of mankind is the history of the efforts which men have made to discover the moral law, and enforce it so far as it is known. If we are asked why the moral laws, being of so much consequence to the well-being of mankind, were not made clear from the beginning, we can but answer that we do not know. The fact has been that they have been left to human energy to discover, like the law of gravitation ; our knowledge of them has been progressive, like our knowledge in every other department of nature ; and religious theories exhibit the same early imperfections, and the same gradual advance, as astronomy or medicine.

A second phenomenon is no less apparent on the most cursory as well as the most careful study of religious history. To obey the moral law has been always difficult ; to practise particular rites, or to profess

particular opinions, is comparatively easy. Religions, therefore, as their initial fervour dies away, have uniformly shown a tendency to stiffen into ceremonial or superstitious observances, or else into theological theories. Duty has been made to consist in the compliance with particular creeds, or in practices of outward devotion; and a compromise has been thus arrived at, by which men have been enabled to believe themselves religious, without parting from their private self-indulgence. Religion has had two parts,—the inward moral and spiritual, the outward ritualistic, or speculative; and the division between them, and the history of their effects upon mankind, when one or the other has preponderated, is the most signal testimony to their real character, and to the relations in which they stand to each other and to the world. Where the moral element has been foremost, where men have been chiefly bent upon contending with practical evil, and making so much as they can understand of the law of God the rule of their dealings among themselves, there the religion has spread over the earth like water for the purifying the nations. Where the superstitious or theological element has been in the ascendant, where charity has been second to orthodoxy, and religion has been an affair of temples and sacrifices and devotional refinements, there as uniformly it has lost its beneficent powers, it has fraternized with the blackest and darkest of human passions, and has carried with it as its shadow, division and hatred and cruelty. The power in the universe, whatever it be, which envies human happiness, has laid hold of conscience and distracted it from its proper function. Instead of looking any more for our duties to our neighbours, we go astray, and quarrel with each other over imaginary speculative theories. We wonder at the failure of Christianity, at

the small progress which it has made in comparison with the brilliancy of its rise: but if men had shown as much fanaticism in carrying into practice the Sermon on the Mount as in disputing the least of the thousand dogmatic definitions which have superseded the Gospel, we should not be now lamenting with Father Newman that 'God's control over the world is so indirect, and His action so obscure.'

The theological tendency, nevertheless, remains in possession; opinions are still looked upon as the test whether we are on the right road or the wrong; and it is in this direction and not the other that Father Newman would have us travel if our condition is to be mended.

Devotion must have its objects, he tells us; and they must be set before the mind as propositions, with which the intellect must be fed till it is saturated; the intellect in return will then guarantee that they are true by the tenacity with which it holds these propositions.

He gives an instance of what he means in the use which he prescribes for the book of Psalms. 'The exercise of the affections strengthens our apprehension of the object of them,' he says, 'and it is impossible to exaggerate the influence exerted on the religious imagination, by a book of devotions so sublime, so penetrating, so full of deep instruction as the Psalter.' We are to take the Psalter, however, as a whole; we may not inquire what part of it is authentic, or whether David, whose acts were of so mixed a character, was always divinely guided in his words. If we take the forty-second Psalm, we must take the hundred-and-ninth; and those who accept the hundred-and-ninth as the word of God, are already far on their way towards auto-da-fés and massacres of St Bartholomew.

When the mind is thus devotionally pervaded, the Catholic theology will be developed by the theological intellect as naturally as geometrical theorems from the elementary axioms and propositions. The difficulty is with the preparation of the soil; and if we find Father Newman unpersuasive, the fault may be simply in ourselves. Persuasiveness implies agreement in first principles between the teacher and the taught. It is possible that we may be colour blind, or be without ear to follow the harmony of the theological variations. The Catholic doctrines may carry conviction only to the elect. Those who are chosen to inherit the blessing, may alone have grace to apprehend its conditions. If it be so, we are beyond help; but we claim for the present to belong to those who believe in God and in the moral laws, and to those, therefore, to whom Father Newman says that his book is addressed. In this character we have a right to speak, and when he fails to convince us, to give reasons for withholding our assent.

Having chosen his course, he commences characteristically with an exulting eulogy on the Athanasian Creed. No one, he seems to admit, can understand what the Creed means. 'The pure indivisible light,' he says, 'is seen only by the blessed inhabitants of Heaven.' The rays come to us on earth, 'broken into their constituent colours;' and when we attempt to combine them 'we produce only a dirty white.' Each ray, nevertheless, comes direct to us from above. It can be separately admired and adored for its particular beauty; and, when intelligence fails, faith steps in. So with the million developments of theological subtlety. Simple-minded people cannot enter into these refinements; the terminology itself is unintelligible without a special and scientific education. But simple-minded

men are not required to understand them. Their duty is merely to feel certain that every proposition laid down by the Church is true, and they are able to do it in virtue of a comprehensive acceptance of the authority of the Church itself. The Church says so and so, and therefore it is indisputably certain that the truth is so and so.

The difficulty is removed by the dogma of the Church's infallibility, and of the consequent duty of 'implicit faith' in her word. The 'One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church' is an article of the creed, and an article which, inclusive of her infallibility, all men, high and low, can easily master and accept with a real and operative assent. It stands in the place of all abstruse propositions in a Catholic's mind, *for* to believe in her word is virtually to believe in them all. Even what he cannot understand, at least he can believe to be true ; and he believes it to be true because he believes in the Church.

The next question of course is, How we can be certain that the Church is infallible ? and to understand this we are carried back once more into the metaphysics of conviction. For the infallibility of the Church, or any truth, to produce an animating effect upon us, we must assent to it unconditionally ; and Father Newman has first to prove in general, as against Locke and the inductive philosophy, that a state of undoubting assurance on these abstruse subjects is itself legitimate.

'Assent,' he says, is a distinct act of the mind which declares that it is made up. 'It resembles the striking of a clock.' . . . It is an intimation that argument is over, the conclusion accepted, and the possibility of error no longer entertained. Numberless propositions are, in fact, held in this way in ordinary life. Each of us, for instance, holds with undoubting certainty, the proposition that 'I shall die,' or again, that 'England is an island.' 'The fact of our death is in the future, and therefore in its nature contingent. We may have never ourselves personally sailed round England. Yet,

in neither case, have we any doubt, or can a person of ordinary intelligence admit that there is room for doubt.'

The appeal to ordinary intelligence corresponds to the appeal at a later stage of the argument to the religious instincts of barbarous nations. Ordinary intelligence jumps hastily to conclusions. It is as often wrong as right, and the strength with which it holds a particular opinion may only be an index of want of thought. The proposition that 'I shall die' seems at the first blush as indisputable as that the whole is greater than its part. But those who accept the infallibility of St Paul believe that, at the last trumpet, those that are alive will be caught up into the air without dying at all. The last day, they are warned, will come like a thief in the night, and they are charged to be on the watch for it. The thought, therefore, that it may come in their time will present itself not as a probability, but certainly as something not utterly impossible. Ordinary intelligence again is similarly absolutely certain that England is an island. The man of science is certain of it too, but in the sense of the word which Father Newman quarrels with. Sudden geographical changes are extremely rare; but the time has been when England was not an island, and the time may come when it will be re-attached to the continent. The Channel is shallow, not much deeper anywhere than the towers of Westminster Abbey. Extensive tracts of the globe have been rapidly depressed and rapidly raised again. It is therefore possible, though very unlikely, that there may be, at some point or other in the Channel, at any moment, a sudden upheaval.

'Certainty,' Father Newman insists, is the same in kind wherever and by whomsoever it is experienced.

The gravely and cautiously formed conclusion of the scientific investigator, and the determination of the school-girl, that the weather is going to be fine, do not differ from each other so far as they are acts of the mind. And the school-girl has *pro tanto* an evidence in her conviction that the fact will be as she believes. Nay, rather the laborious inference hesitatingly held after patient and sceptical examination, Father Newman considers inferior in character, and likely to be less productive of fruit than assent more impulsively yielded.

In such instances of certitude, the previous labour of coming to a conclusion, and that repose of mind which I have above described as attendant on an assent to its truth, often counteracts whatever of lively sensation the fact thus concluded is in itself adapted to excite; so that what is gained in depth and exactness of belief is lost as regards freshness and vigour. Hence it is that literary or scientific men, who may have investigated some difficult point of history, philosophy, or physics, and have come to their own settled conclusion about it, having had a perfect right to form one, are far more disposed to be silent as to their convictions, and to let others alone, than partisans on either side of the question, who take it up with less thought and seriousness. And so again, in the religious world, no one seems to look for any great devotion or fervour in controversialists, writers on Christian Evidences, theologians, and the like, it being taken for granted, rightly or wrongly, that such men are too intellectual to be spiritual, and are more occupied with the truth of doctrine than with its reality. If, on the other hand, we would see what the force of simple assent can be, viewed apart from its reflex confirmation, we have but to look at the generous and uncalculating energy of faith as exemplified in the primitive Martyrs, in the youths who defied the pagan tyrant, or the maidens who were silent under his tortures. It is assent, pure and simple, which is the motive cause of great achievements; it is confidence, growing out of instincts rather than arguments, stayed upon a vivid apprehension, and animated by a transcendent logic, more concentrated in will and in deed for the very reason that it has not been subjected to any intellectual development.

Nothing can be more true than this, as applied to moral obligation; nothing more illusory if extended to doctrine or external fact. I may think myself right, but there is still a bridge to be crossed between my

thought and the reality. My own experience assures me too painfully of my fallibility. I have experienced equally the fallibility of others. No one can seriously maintain that a consciousness of certitude is an evidence of facts on which I can rely. Yet Father Newman clings to the belief that in some sense or other it is a legitimate proof to any man of the truth of any opinion which he peremptorily holds. 'It is characteristic of certitude,' he says, 'that its object is a truth, a truth as such, a proposition as true. There are right and wrong convictions, and certitude is a right conviction; if it is not right with a consciousness of being right, it is not certitude. Now, truth cannot change; what is once truth is always truth; and the human mind is made for truth, and so rests in truth, as it cannot rest in falsehood. When then it once becomes possessed of a truth, what is to dispossess it?'

It is open to Father Newman to distinguish, if he pleases, between certitude and conviction. He may say that we may be convinced of what is false, but only certain of what is true. But this is nothing to the purpose, so long as we have no criterion to distinguish one from the other as an internal impression. Father Newman is certain that the Pope is Vicar of Christ. Luther was no less certain that the Pope was Antichrist. Father Newman believes that the substance of bread is taken away in the act of consecration. The Protestant martyrs died rather than admit that bread could cease to be bread when a priest mumbled a charm over it. Who or what is to decide between these several acts of consciousness, which was certitude and which conviction?

The Church evidently is the true *Deus ex machina*. The church, in virtue of its infallibility, will resolve this and all other difficulties; and the infallibility,

it seems, is somehow or other its own witness, and proves itself as Spinoza demonstrated the existence of God. 'I form a conception,' Spinoza says, 'of an absolutely perfect being. But existence is a mode of perfection; a non-existent being is an imperfect being; and therefore God's existence is involved in the Idea of Him.' Father Newman similarly appears to say that the mind is made for truth, and demands it as a natural right. Of the elementary truth that the Church is infallible it can be as sure as that Victoria is Queen of England; and this once established it has all that it requires. It is true that we have made mistakes; but *usum non tollit abusus*. That we have been often wrong does not imply that we may not be right at last. Our faculties have a correspondence with truth. They were given to us to lead us into truth, and though they fail many times they may bring us right at last. Once established in certitude we have nothing more to fear, and may defy argument thenceforth. Our past mistakes may after all have been only apparent. We have called ourselves certain, when we had only a strong presumption, an opinion, or an intellectual inference. Or again, we may fancy that we have changed our minds when in fact we have not changed our convictions but only developed them; as a Theist remains a Theist though he add to his Theism a faith in revelation; and a Protestant continues to hold the Athanasian Creed though he pass into a Catholic. St Paul is admitted to be a difficulty; St Paul indisputably did once hold that Christianity was an illusion; but St Paul is got rid of by being made an exceptional person. 'His conversion, as also his after life, was miraculous.'

Any way, when once possessed of certitude, we cannot lose it. No evidence, however clear, can shake us

thenceforward. ‘Certitude ought to stand all trials or it is not certitude.’ Its very office is to cherish and maintain its object, and its very lot and duty is to sustain such shocks in maintenance of it without being damaged by them. Father Newman takes an example, and it is an extremely significant one.

Let us suppose we are told on an unimpeachable authority, that a man whom we saw die is now alive again and at his work, as it was his wont to be ; let us suppose we actually see him and converse with him ; what will become of our certitude of his death ? I do not think we should give it up ; how could we, when we actually saw him die ? At first, indeed, we should be thrown into an astonishment and confusion so great, that the world would seem to reel round us, and we should be ready to give up the use of our senses and of our memory, of our reflective powers, and of our reason, and even to deny our power of thinking, and our existence itself. Such confidence have we in the doctrine that when life goes it never returns. Nor would our bewilderment be less, when the first blow was over ; but our reason would rally, and with our reason our certitude would come back to us. Whatever came of it, we should never cease to know and to confess to ourselves both of the contrary facts, that we saw him die, and that after dying we saw him alive again. The overpowering strangeness of our experience would have no power to shake our certitude in the facts which created it.

No better illustration could have been given of the difference between what is called in commendation ‘a believing mind,’ and a mind trained to careful and precise observation. In such a case as Father Newman supposes, a jury of modern physicians would indisputably conclude that life had never been really extinct, that the symptoms had been mistaken, and the phenomena of catalepsy had been confounded with the phenomena of death. If catalepsy was impossible, if the man had appeared, for instance, to lose his head on the scaffold, they would assume that there had been a substitution of persons, or that the observers had been taken in by some skilful optical trick. Father Newman may, perhaps, go further and suppose that they had themselves seen the man tied

to a gun and blown to pieces beyond possibility of deception. But a man of science would reply that such a case could not occur. That men once dead do not return to life again has been revealed by an experience too uniform to allow its opposite to be entertained even as a hypothesis.

Catholic certitude involving the acceptance of miracles, the development of the subject brings up naturally the famous argument of Hume. Father Newman is more candid in his statement of it than Butler. Butler, perhaps, had not read Hume's *Essay*, or he could hardly have evaded so completely the point of the objection. Men suppose, Butler says, that there is an antecedent presumption against miracles; and he answers that there is a strong presumption against half the facts of ordinary experience. There are fifty ways which I may go after I leave my door. The odds are forty-nine to one against my taking any particular way that can be mentioned, yet when a person says that he saw me go that way and not another, his evidence is accepted without difficulty, and the fact is taken to be proved. But this is entirely to leave out of sight the difference between occurrences which are contrary to experience, and therefore improbable in themselves, and occurrences which have no inherent unlikelihood about them. That a notorious liar should have perjured himself in a court of justice would excite no surprise in itself, and would be believed on moderate evidence. That a notoriously noble and upright man should have consciously done a base action for a selfish object would be so incredible to us, that scarcely any accumulation of proof would persuade us that it was true.

Dr Newman states the argument more justly, though we cannot think he succeeds in meeting it.

'It is argued by Hume,' he says, 'against the actual occurrence of the Jewish and Christian miracles, that, whereas "it is experience only which gives authority to human testimony, and it is the same experience which assures us of the laws of nature," therefore, "when these two kinds of experience are contrary" to each other, "we are bound to subtract the one from the other," and, in consequence, since we have no experience of a violation of natural laws, and much experience of the violation of truth, "we may establish it as a maxim, that no human testimony can have such force as to prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for any system of religion."

This is Hume's real argument accurately though briefly stated. How does Dr Newman answer it?

'I will accept the general proposition,' he says, 'but I resist its application. Doubtless, it is abstractedly more likely that men should lie than that the order of nature should be infringed; but what is abstract reasoning to a question of concrete fact? To arrive at the fact of any matter, we must eschew generalities, and take things as they stand, with all their circumstances. . . . The question is not about miracles in general, or men in general, but definitely, whether these particular miracles, ascribed to the particular Peter, James, and John, are more likely to have been than not.'

'More likely to have been than not' is a widely different thing from absolute certainty, and verges on the balancing of probability which elsewhere is so severely disclaimed. But after a man has accepted the general proposition, how in reason can he ask what it has to do with concrete fact? What else should it have to do with? It is not an axiom of pure mathematics or a formula made up of symbols. It professes to be

and it is a generalization from concrete experience. It calls itself, rightly or wrongly, an expression of a universal truth, and being such, must therefore govern every particular instance which can be brought under it. Had Hume said simply that miracles were improbable, and that more evidence was required to establish them than to establish ordinary facts, the answer would have been to the purpose; but the gist of Hume's argument is that no evidence whatever can prove a miracle, and to accept the premiss and to refuse its application on the plea that it is an abstract proposition, is to fly in the face of logic and common sense. Catholics, in fact, do not and cannot feel the improbability of miracles. An invisible but definite miracle is worked whenever a mass is said. In Catholic countries miracles, real or imaginary, are things of daily occurrence. Under 'particular circumstances' they are more likely to occur than not, and therefore any, even the slightest and most indirect, testimony is sufficient to make credible any given instance of miracle.

Prejudices, prepossessions, 'trifles light as air,' irregular emotions, implicit reasons, 'such as we feel, but which for some cause or other, because they are too subtle or too circuitous, we cannot put into words so as to satisfy logic,' these, and such as these, in matters of religion, are genuine evidences to which, we are told, a reasonable man is expected to defer. Having once passed the line where evidence can be produced and tested, we are at the mercy of imagination, and the reader who has thus committed himself can now be led forward blindfold through the analytical labyrinth. The intellectual faculties, 'looking before and after,' are touched as it were by a torpedo. Our criteria of truth leave us. One thing seems as reason-

able as another. We strike our flag and surrender. We 'consent,' as Father Newman advises us, 'to take things as they are and resign ourselves to what we find; instead of devising, which cannot be, some sufficient science of reasoning which may compel certitude in concrete conclusions; to confess that there is no ultimate test of truth besides the testimony borne to the truth by the mind itself; and that this phenomenon, perplexing as we may find it, is a normal and inevitable characteristic of the mental constitution of a being like man on a stage such as the world.'

In this condition we are invited to recognize the claims of the Catholic Church upon us. 'The Catholic religion,' we are told, 'is reached by inquirers from all points of the compass, as if it mattered not where a man began so that he had an eye and heart for the truth.' Before 'the miserable deeds of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries' 'the visible Church was the light of the world, conspicuous as the sun in the heavens. The creed was written on her forehead,' in accordance with the text, 'Who is she that looks forth at the dawn, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?' 'Clouds have now come over the sky, but what the Church has lost in her appeal to the imagination she has gained in philosophical cogency by the evidence of her persistent vitality. She is as vigorous in her age as in her youth, and has upon her *prima facie* signs of divinity.'

Whether the Church has really gained in philosophical cogency by the Reformation and its consequences is a matter on which Father Newman has a right to his opinion; but others have also a right to theirs, which will probably be different. To ourselves it appears that what vitality she possesses is proportioned to the degree in which she has adopted the

principles of her enemies, that so far as she retains her own she becomes every hour more powerless to act upon them. If it be vitality to have lost her hold on nine-tenths of the educated laymen in her own communion; if it be vitality to have compelled every Catholic Government to take from her the last fibre of secular and civil authority, to deprive her even of her control over education, and relegate her to the domain of mere opinion; if it be a sign of vigour that her once world-wide temporal authority is now limited to a single state, and supported there by the bayonets of a stranger,¹ then indeed the evidence of her divinity may be said to have gained strength. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Church destroyed by sword and fire many hundreds of thousands of men and women in the effort to recover her dominion. She still professes intolerance, and Father Newman himself claims it as her right. Let her lay her hand upon one single heretic and dispose of him, as she used to do, at the stake; let but one man, now on the occasion of this brilliant Council, be publicly burnt in Rome for want of orthodoxy; and who does not know that the whole ecclesiastical fabric would be torn to pieces by the indignation of mankind?

Yet to Father Newman the position of the Church is so splendid, she is so visibly the representative of the majesty of God, that she challenges comparison with every other religious institution, and has a claim in the fact of her existence to universal submission.

He now passes on to show in detail how the Church in her teaching and character corresponds with the demands of our nature. Returning to natural religion, but henceforward in another relation to it, he appeals to the primitive traditions of our race, and to the

¹ Written in the spring of 1870.

present beliefs and practices of savage nations, for the elementary and instinctive principles of devotion.

The condition of the savage from the point of view of history, is simple and intelligible. Ignorant of the nature of the forces which surround him, ignorant that the movements of the stars, the revolution of the seasons, the phenomena of growth and decay, and sickness and health, are the result of agencies constant in their operation and discoverable by observation, he attributes them to the capricious will of beings like himself, and differing from him only in power. He makes God or gods after his own image, and knowing that he himself is alternately generous and benevolent, and vindictive and passionate, treats his divinities as he is himself treated by his own slaves, regards them with a combination of love and terror, and prays to them, flatters them, and sacrifices to them, to win their favour to himself, and bribe them to look kindly on his enterprises. Ill fortune affecting him more keenly than prosperity, he attributes to them uniformly a disposition of envy, if not of malignity. He concludes that they bear a grudge against human happiness, and must be propitiated if their jealousy is to be appeased. He passes over without attention the ordinary occurrences of life. He dwells on the exceptions. He shudders at the eclipse, the thunder-storm, or the epidemic. He is excited by coincidents and accidents. He looks for God, not in nature, but in what seem to him to be interferences with nature, and according as they affect his own fortunes, he believes that supernatural beings are watching over him for good or for evil.

Tendencies which result manifestly from ignorance of natural causes, and yield everywhere before attention to facts, are to Father Newman the first trustworthy exhibition of the spiritual instincts of mankind. The

religion of cultivation, the clearer insight which has been obtained by science into the system under which the world is really governed, he sets aside as unworthy of consideration—as beside the question—as a mode of thought developed by intellect alone to the exclusion of conscience. He despises modern ideas on these and kindred matters so entirely that he cannot treat them with the fairness which his argument demands, for he challenges comparison for the Catholic Church with every rival belief, and he will not allow it to be compared with the creed which now divides the educated world with her. The savage is his spiritual ancestor, from whom he glories in being the visible descendant. He might as well say that the science of astronomy ought not to be gathered from actual observation of the movements of the heavenly bodies, but should be developed rather from the primitive ideas of the early races, which saw in the stars and constellations of stars the monuments of the loves of the gods or the trophies of their wars.

He dwells with especial satisfaction on the cruel element of most heathen creeds, particularly on the propitiatory sacrifices. He insists on the vindictive character of Divine punishment—vindictive as distinct from corrective—and in his passion for retribution forgets or obliterates justice. That an offence be followed by retaliation is the first necessity to him. That the criminal himself should be the person to suffer is only the second. Civilized nations endeavour imperfectly to limit the consequences of bad actions to the perpetrators themselves. We consider governments to be good or bad as men receive under them the just reward of their conduct. Father Newman's sense of equity is satisfied with vicarious penalties; and as he prefers the fetish of the savage to the philosophy of the

man of science, we presume that he would consider the criminal system of China nearer than that of Europe to the general order of Providence. In China, when a murder has been committed, the law demands life for life; but Chinese justice is satisfied with the punishment of somebody, and the criminal is permitted to find a substitute. Father Newman says: 'Since all human suffering is in its last resolution the punishment of sin, and punishment implies a rule and a rule of justice, he who undergoes the punishment of another in his stead may be said in a certain sense to satisfy the claims of justice towards that other in his own person.' We should rather say that when the innocent suffers for the guilty a second wrong has been added to the first: and although, in the imperfection of human things, justice often misses its mark, and in the confusion and whirl of life the penalties of evil deeds are distributed unequally and unfairly, the function of human society is to redress these inequalities rather than acquiesce in them and sanction them; and a government stands high or low in its claim to honour and respect, according as it adjusts punishments to the shoulders on which they legitimately ought to fall.

Modern ideas on these and similar subjects are here characterized, however, as 'simply false,' 'inasmuch as they contradict the primary teaching of nature in the human race, wherever a religion is found and its workings can be ascertained.' Father Newman's views are, in one respect, consistent. He admits that these religions, to which he pays so much honour, 'in the corrupt state in which they appear in history, are little better than schools of imposture, cruelty, and impurity,' and inasmuch as he considers that 'God is sanctity, truth, and love, and the three offences against His majesty are impurity, unveracity, and cruelty,' the

acknowledgment seriously impairs their value as authorities. The Church, however, it must be confessed, has in this respect made good its kindred with them. The monasteries in the sixteenth century were found to be nests of unnatural crime. The claims of the Holy See were built on forged decretals, the Bible was supplanted by legends of saints, and the bloody customs of Dahomey are less atrocious than the Paris frenzy on the day of St Bartholomew, for which Gregory XIII. ordered a Te Deum.

If the corrupt early religions are notwithstanding more trustworthy than philosophy, it is but reasonable to maintain that the Church may have committed the same crimes, and retain in spite of them its divine claims to our admiration.

The dominant Catholic Church (he continues) aimed at the benefit of all nations by the spiritual conquest of all; . . . its successes have on the whole been of extreme benefit to the human race. It has imparted an intelligent notion about the Supreme God among millions who would have lived and died in irreligion. It has raised the tone of morality wherever it has come, has abolished great social anomalies and miseries, has raised the female sex to its proper dignity, has protected the poorer classes, has destroyed slavery, encouraged literature and philosophy, and had a principal part in that civilization of the human kind, which with some evils still has on the whole been productive of far greater good.

This is hardy, to say the least of it. When the Church was in the plenitude of its power, the notion taught by it of the Supreme God was that of a being who looked approvingly on an *auto-da-fé*, who could be bribed to remit the penalties of sin by masses purchased with money; who, though all-wise and all-good, could be turned aside from His purpose by the entreaties or remonstrances of the saints. The same notion is still evidently held by Father Newman himself, who has submitted to a Church, whose voice he regards as the voice of the Holy Spirit, yet whose impending de-

cisions he ventures to deprecate and dread. He argues as if the Holy Spirit were about to dictate a decree the effects of which had been imperfectly considered. He tells us that he prays to Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Basil, to avert the great calamity ; and, as if the Supreme Power were indifferent or blind, believes, or affects to believe, 'that their intercession would decide the matter.' Of all theories ever proposed by man on the government of the universe, this seems to us to be about the maddest.¹

As for the other achievements which he claims for Romanism, history would say that the abolition of social anomalies had commenced with the revolt of the sixteenth century, and had progressed side by side with the intellectual movement which he detests and despises. The Spaniards, the most Catholic of nations, were the most ruthless in their conquests, and have been the last to part with their slaves. The extinction of serfdom in England was coincident with the Reformation. The tyranny of the French aristocracy survived unmolested while the Church was predominant, and fell with its fall. As to encouragement of literature, what one distinguished man of letters in the last three centuries has owed anything to the patronage of Rome ?

Father Newman pays an unwilling compliment to the Reformation in claiming the effects of it for the body to which he belongs. An analogous deference to the modern spirit appears still more singularly in the following ingenious passage :—

Eternity or endlessness is in itself only a negative idea, though punishment is positive. Its fearful force, as added to punishment, lies in what it is not. It means no change of state, no annihilation, no restoration, but it cannot become a quality of punishment any

¹ The allusion is to a letter of Father Newman's, published while the Council was sitting in Rome, and before it had decided the 'Infallibility.'

more than a man's living seventy years is a quality of his mind, or enters into the idea of his virtues or talents. If punishment be attended by continuity, or by sense of succession, this must be because it is endless and something more. Such inflictions are an addition to its endlessness, and do not necessarily belong to it because it is endless. As I have already said, the great mystery is not that evil has no end, but that it had a beginning. But I remit the whole subject to the Theological School.

The time has been when the fathers of the Church conceived that a principal source of the happiness of the blessed would be the contemplation of the torments of the damned. We cannot jump off our shadows, and as little can we escape the influence of the society in which we live. Father Newman is as unable as the most tender-hearted liberal to contemplate without horror the never-ending conscious agony of a human soul.

To draw these remarks to a conclusion. What has been said is from the nature of the case no more than a series of imperfectly connected criticisms. To do justice to a book so closely written and so delicately organized would require a volume as long as itself and a skill equal to its author's. We have been able only to indicate the line of its purpose, and to take objections to the successive positions which are assumed as the argument develops itself.

The conclusion contains a beautiful sketch of the rise of Christianity, with an analysis of the causes assigned by Gibbon in explanation of its spread and an exhibition of their insufficiency. We are not concerned to defend Gibbon, whose reasoning on this subject has always appeared to us singularly unconvincing. Still less do we wish to question the nature of the power which enabled Christianity to diffuse itself; though we may mean by Christianity something else than Father Newman means, and by the power which enabled it to grow, a spiritual influence working from

mind to mind, rather than an external supernatural force. Father Newman identifies Christianity with the complex doctrinal system embodied in the formulas and represented in the constitution of the Catholic Church. We mean by it the code of moral duties which were taught by our Lord upon the Mount, and which, as the type of human perfection, He illustrated in His own character. In so far as the Catholic Church has adhered to the original pattern, in so far as it has addressed itself to the moral sense, and has aimed rather at making men good than at furnishing their intellects with orthodox formulas, so far it has fulfilled its function of regenerating mankind. Under this aspect the spread of it ceases to be a mystery. The Roman world was sunk in lies, insincere idolatry, and the coarsest and most revolting profligacy. There is something in human nature, in all times and in all countries, which instinctively recoils against such things, something which says that lies are to be abhorred, and that purity is nobler than bestiality; and when the bad side of things is at its worst the nobler sort of men refuse to put up with it longer. The Roman government offered to the devotion of the empire a *Divus Nero* or a *Divus Domitianus*. The image of a peasant of Palestine, a being of stainless integrity, appeared simultaneously, pointing to a Father in heaven and requiring men in His name to lead pure and self-sacrificing lives; and if it be true that man is more than a beast, and that conscious and moral sense are a part of his natural constitution, we require no miracles to explain why millions of men and women with such alternatives before them were found to choose the better part.

Father Newman thinks it unexampled: if he will study the history of the Reformation he will find its

exact counterpart among 'the miserable deeds' of the sixteenth century.

The great mass of Christians were to be found in those classes which were of no account in the world, whether on the score of rank or of education.

We all know this was the case with our Lord and His Apostles. It seems almost irreverent to speak of their temporal employments, when we are so simply accustomed to consider them in their spiritual association; but it is profitable to remind ourselves that our Lord Himself was a sort of smith, and made ploughs and cattle-yokes. Four apostles were fishermen, one a petty tax-collector, two husbandmen, one is said to have been a coachman, and another a market-gardener. When Peter and John were brought before the Council, they are spoken of as being, in a secular point of view, 'illiterate men, and of the lower sort,' and thus they are spoken of in a later age by the fathers.

That their converts were of the same rank as themselves is reported, in their favour or to their discredit, by friends and enemies, for four centuries. 'If a man be educated,' says Celsus in mockery, 'let him keep clear of us Christians; we want no men of wisdom, no men of sense. We account all such as evil. No; but, if there be one who is inexperienced, or stupid, or untaught, or a fool, let him come with good heart.' 'They are weavers,' he says elsewhere, 'shoemakers, fullers, illiterate, clowns.' 'Fools, low-born fellows,' says Trypho. 'The greater part of you,' says Cæcilius, 'are worn with want, cold, toil, and famine; men collected from the lowest dregs of the people; ignorant, credulous women;' 'unpolished, boors, illiterate, ignorant even of the sordid arts of life; they do not understand even civil matters, how can they understand divine?' 'They have left their tongs, mallets, and anvils, to preach about the things of heaven,' says Libanius. 'They deceive women, servants, and slaves,' says Julian. The author of *Philopatris* speaks of them as 'poor creatures, blocks, withered old fellows, men of downcast and pale visages.' As to their religion, it had the reputation popularly, according to various fathers, of being an anile superstition, the discovery of old women, a joke, a madness, an infatuation, an absurdity, a fanaticism.

For Celsus and Julian write the Jesuit Campion, and we have exactly the language which was applied to English Protestantism. Protestantism, like Christianity itself, began from below. The Marian martyrs were nine-tenths of them petty tradesmen and mechanics. The Christian brothers who first imported Tyndal's New Testament were weavers, carpenters, and cobblers; and the Catholic missionaries who came over

in Elizabeth's time to re-conquer England declared that their only opponents were to be found among the vilest of the people.

The Catholic Religion in the sixteenth century had become like the heathen religions in the first. It had forgotten moral duty in the development of its theology. The service of God had become a juggler's game ; the only visible fruits of it were tyranny and simony and lasciviousness : and the uncorrupted part of Europe rose in indignation and declared that they would remain in it no longer ; that God was a Spirit, and those who worshipped Him should worship in spirit and in truth. The Church treated them as the Roman Empire had treated the Church in its infancy. They suffered martyrdom like the early Christians in defence of the same principles, and like them they conquered.

If we are now perplexed and disheartened, if some of us are looking back into Egypt and others are staggering into Atheism, it is because Protestants themselves have struck in turn into the same miserable course. They too have mistaken theology for religion, and strangled themselves in dogmatic formulas. The Catholic turned religion into ritual, the Protestant has made it consist in holding particular opinions, and at once has become an idolater like the other. He has grown afraid of intelligence. He has shrunk from facts, and prefers a pious belief to the recognition of obvious truths. He has lost his horror of falsehood, and with it the secret of his strength. But as Christianity was in the beginning, so Protestantism was when it rose in its first revolt. The resources of it were no greater, yet its story was the same. The parallel which Father Newman looks for in vain he will find there if he cares to seek for it, and it is fatal to his own theory.

CONDITION AND PROSPECTS OF PROTESTANTISM.

IN one of the western counties, the writer of this paper was recently present at an evening Evangelical prayer-meeting. The congregation were partly church-goers, partly dissenters of various denominations, united for the time by the still active revivalist excitement. Some were highly educated men and women: farmers, tradesmen, servants, sailors, and fishermen made up the rest: all were representative specimens of Evangelical Christians, passionate doctrinalists, convinced that they, and only they, possessed the 'Open Sesame' of heaven, but doing credit to their faith by inoffensive, if not useful, lives. One of them, who took a leading part in the proceedings, was a person of large fortune, who was devoting his money, time, and talents to what he called the truth. Another was well known through two counties as a hard-headed, shrewd, effective man of business; a stern, but on the whole, and as times went, beneficent despot over many thousands of unmanageable people.

The services consisted of a series of addresses from different speakers, interchanged with extempore prayers, directed rather to the audience than to the Deity. At intervals, the congregation sung hymns, and sung them particularly well. The teaching was of the ordinary

kind expressed only with more than usual distinctness. We were told that the business of each individual man and woman in the world was to save his or her soul ; that we were all sinners together—all equally guilty, hopeless, lost, accursed children, unable to stir a finger or do a thing to help ourselves. Happily, we were not required to stir a finger ; rather, we were forbidden to attempt it. An antidote had been provided for our sins, and a substitute for our obedience. Everything had been done for us. We had but to lay hold of the perfect righteousness which had been fulfilled in our behalf. We had but to put on the vesture provided for our wearing, and our safety was assured. The reproaches of conscience were silenced. We were perfectly happy in this world, and certain to be blessed in the next. If, on the other hand, we neglected the offered grace ; if, through carelessness, or intellectual perverseness, or any other cause, we did not apprehend it in the proper manner ; if we tried to please God ourselves by 'works of righteousness,' the sacrifice would then cease to avail us. It mattered nothing whether, in the common acceptation of the word, we were good or bad ; we were lost all the same, condemned by perfect justice to everlasting torture.

It is, of course, impossible for human creatures to act towards one another on these principles. The man of business on week days deals with those whom he employs on week-day rules. He gives them work to do, and he expects them to do it. He knows the meaning of good desert as well as of ill desert. He promises and he threatens. He praises and he blames. He will not hear of vicarious labour. He rewards the honest and industrious. He punishes the lazy and the vicious. He finds society so constructed that it cannot exist unless men treat one another as responsible

for their actions, and as able to do right as well as wrong.

And, again, one remembered that the Christian's life on earth used to be represented as a warfare ; that the soldier who went into battle considering only how he could save his own life, would do little credit to the cause he was fighting for ; and that there were other things besides and before saving their souls which earnest men used to think about.

The listeners, however, seemed delighted. They were hearing what they had come to hear—what they had heard a thousand times before, and would hear with equal ardour a thousand times again—the gospel in a nutshell ; the magic formulas which would cheat the devil of his due. However antinomian the theory might sound, it was not abused by anybody present for purposes of self-indulgence. While they said that it was impossible for men to lead good lives, they were, most of them, contradicting their words by their practice. While they professed to be thinking only of their personal salvation, they were benevolent, generous, and self-forgetful. People may express themselves in what formulas they please ; but if they sincerely believe in God, they try to act uprightly and justly ; and the language of theology, hovering, as it generally does, between extravagance and conventionality, must not be scanned too narrowly.

There is, indeed, attaching to all propositions, one important condition—that they are either true or false ; and it is noticeable that religious people reveal unconsciously, in their way of speaking, a misgiving that the ground is insecure under them. We do not mean, of course, that they knowingly maintain what they believe may possibly be a mistake ; but whatever persuasion they belong to, they do not talk about truth, but they

talk about *the truth*; *the truth* being the doctrine which, for various reasons, they each prefer. Truth exists independently of them. It is searched for by observation and reason. It is tested by evidence. There is a more and a less in the degree to which men are able to arrive at it. On the other hand, for *the truth* the believer has the testimony of his heart. It suits his spiritual instincts; it answers his spiritual desires. There is no 'perhaps' about it; no balancing of argument. Catholics, Anglicans, Protestants are each absolutely certain that they are right. God, it would seem, makes truth; men make *the truth*; which, more or less, approaches to the other, but is not identical with it. If it were not so, these different bodies, instead of quarrelling, would agree. The measure of approximation is the measure of the strength or usefulness of the different systems. Experience is the test. If in virtue of any creed men lead active, upright, self-denying lives, the creed itself is tolerable; and whatever its rivals may say about it, is not, and cannot be, utterly false.

It seems, however, as if the Evangelicals were painfully anxious to disclaim any such criterion. When the first address was over, the congregation sung the following singular hymn, one of a collection of which, it appeared from the title-page, that many hundred thousand copies were in circulation:

Nothing, either great or small,
Nothing, sinners, no;
Jesus did it—did it all
Long, long ago.

It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot :
Sinners, this is all you need.
Tell me, Is it not?

When He from His lofty throne
Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done :
Harken to His cry,—

Weary, weary, burdened one,
Wherefore toil you so ?
Cease your doing, all was done
Long, long ago.

Till to Jesus' work you cling
By a simple faith,
Doing is a deadly thing,
Doing ends in death.

Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet,
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.

And this, we said to ourselves, is Protestantism. To do our duty has become a deadly thing. This is what, after three centuries, the creed of Knox and Luther, of Coligny and Gustavus Adolphus, has come to. The first Reformers were so anxious about what man did, that if they could they would have laid the world under a discipline as severe as that of the Roman Censors. Their modern representatives are wiser than their fathers and know better what their Maker requires of them. To the question, 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?' the answer of old was not, 'Do nothing,' but 'Keep the commandments.' It was said by the Apostle from whose passionate metaphors Protestant theology is chiefly constructed, that 'the Gentiles, who did by nature the things contained in the law,' were on the road to the right place. But we have changed all that. We are left face to face with a creed which tells us that God has created us without the power to keep the commandments,—that He does not require us to keep them; yet at the same time that we are infinitely guilty in His eyes for

not keeping them, and that we justly deserve to be tortured for ever and ever, to suffer, as we once heard an amiable excellent clergyman express it, 'to suffer the utmost pain which Omnipotence can inflict, and the creature can endure, without annihilation.'

The scene of the evening was too soothing at the time for unpleasant reflections on the paradoxes of theology. The earnest attention, the piety, the evident warmth of belief, the certainty that those who were so loudly denouncing the worth of human endeavour would carry away with them a more ardent desire to do the works of righteousness of which they were denying the necessity—these things suggested happier conclusions on the condition of humanity: when the hearts of men are sound, the Power which made and guides us corrects the follies of our heads.

Nevertheless, when we are considering the general influence for good or evil of a system or systems, the intellectual aspect of them cannot be disregarded. Religion is, or ought to be, the consecration of the whole man, of his heart, his conduct, his knowledge, and his mind, of the highest faculties which have been given in trust to him, and the highest acquirements which he has obtained for himself. When the gospel was first made generally known through the Roman Empire, it attracted and absorbed the most gifted and thoughtful men then living. Pagan philosophy of the post-Christian era has left no names which will compete on its own ground with those of Origen, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria. When the Reformers broke the spell of superstition in the sixteenth century, their revolt was ascribed by the Catholics to the pride of human reason. Some enchantment must now have passed over Protestantism, or over the minds of those to whom it addresses

itself, when science and cultivation are falling off from it as fast as Protestantism fell away from its rival. How has a creed which had once sounded the spiritual *réveillé* like the blast of the archangel's trumpet come now to proclaim in passionate childishness the 'deadliness' of human duty?

The best that every man knows dies with him ; the part of him which he can leave behind in written words conveys but half his meaning even to the generation which lies nearest to him, to the men whose minds are under the same influences with his own. Later ages, when they imagine that they are following the thoughts of their forefathers, are reading their own thoughts in expressions which serve to them but as a mirror. The pale shadow called Evangelical religion clothes itself in the language of Luther and Calvin. Yet what Luther and Calvin meant is not what it means. The Protestantism of the sixteenth century commanded the allegiance of statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, and men of science. Wherever there was a man of powerful intelligence and noble heart, there was a champion of the Reformation : and the result was a revival, not of internal emotion, but of moral austerity. The passion of Evangelical teachers in every country where the Reformation made its way, was to establish, so far as the world would let them, the discipline of Geneva, to make men virtuous in spite of themselves, and to treat sins as crimes. The writings of Knox and Latimer are not more distinguished by the emphasis with which they thunder against injustice and profligacy than by their all but total silence on 'schemes of salvation.' The Protestantism of the nineteenth century has forsaken practice for opinion. It puts opinion first and practice second ; and in doing so it has parted company with intellect and practical force. It has become the

property of the hysterical temperament which confounds extravagance with earnestness ; and even of those most under its influence, an ever-increasing number are passing back under the shadow of Catholicism, and are taking refuge in the worn-out idolatries from which their fathers set them free. What is the meaning of so singular a phenomenon ? Religion—Protestant as well as Catholic—is ceasing everywhere to control the public life of the State. Government in all countries is becoming sternly secular. The preambles of old Acts of Parliament contained usually in formal words a reference to the will of the Almighty. Legislators looked for instruction not to political economy, but to their Bibles. 'The will of the Almighty' is now banished to the conscience or the closet. The statesman keeps rigidly to the experienced facts of the world, and will have neither priest nor minister to interpret them for him. Political economy may contradict the sermon on the mount, but it is none the less the manual of our political leaders.

Nor does thought fare better than practice. The philosopher takes refuge in a 'perhaps,' and will not be driven to say things are certain which wise men cannot agree about. The man of science is supreme in his own domain, and will not permit theologians to interfere with his conclusions. Society, in its actual life, has long been atheistic. The speculative creed begins to show a tendency to follow in the track of practice. The sovereign of modern literature—the greatest master of modern culture—says distinctly :

Wer Wissenschaft und Kunst besitzt,
 Hat auch Religion ;
Wer jene Beiden nicht besitzt,
 Der habe Religion.

On the whole public life of this age, on its politics, on

its science, on its huge energetic warfare with, and conquest of, nature, might be written the inscription on the pedestal of the statue of Alexander :

Γῆν δὲ ἐμοῦ τίθεμαι, Ζεῦ· σὺ δὲ Ὄλυμπον ἔχε.

That this singular estrangement should have taken place in France and Italy is no matter of surprise. The Catholic Church declared war with science when it denounced Galileo ; and broke with temporal governments when it claimed a right to depose kings. It is chained to a system of doctrine which half Europe, three centuries ago, declared to be incredible, and which has received no further authentication since ; while the taint is on it of the enormous crimes which it committed or prompted to sustain its failing dominion —crimes which it will not condemn and dares not acknowledge. The progress which mankind have made throughout the world in the last ten generations has been achieved in spite of a Church which could coexist with moral corruption, but shrunk from intellectual activity ; which fought against reason with fire and sword, and still mumbles curses where unable longer to use force.

But why should the same phenomenon be visible among Protestants ? Protestantism has no past to be ashamed of. The prosperity of so-called Protestant nations as contrasted with Catholic, is a favourite argument with Protestant controversialists. Protestantism was the creed of Burghley, of Cromwell, of Bacon, of Newton, of Berkeley. It shattered the Spanish Empire ; it fused the United Provinces into a republic, and created in its modern aspect the nationality of Scotland. As a spiritual force there has been nothing equal to it since the growth of Christianity. Why has it, too, lost its power to charm ? Why has the great

river which bore upon its breast the destinies of nations sunk away into the sands of modern civilization ?

The tendency of the changes in progress among us can be dimly seen, although the ultimate outcome of them is beyond the reach of prudent conjecture. The existing facts of the case become daily plainer. The positive creed has lapsed from a rule of life into a debated opinion. It is no longer heard in our legislature. It is no longer respected in our philosophies. Its local spasmodic revivals resemble the convulsive movements of something which is in the agonies of death. Its threats and its promises, however clamorously uttered from the pulpits, are endured with weariness, or with the attention of resentful incredulity.

Let us follow a little further the curious phrase to which we just now alluded. All religious bodies call their doctrine *the truth*—as distinguished from true. It is particularly characteristic of the Evangelicals, who wish to be emphatic, and prefer the warmer expression. The more the words are studied, the more pregnant they appear. Truth is the same in all ages, in all languages, and to all races of men. The two sides of a triangle are greater than the third, in China as well as in England. The Professor of Astronomy at St Petersburg has no more doubt about the Newtonian theory than Le Verrier or Mr Adams. Hindoo surgeons accept and understand the circulation of the blood as easily as the students at St Thomas's. Facts once established are facts for all time; and human beings everywhere can be brought to recognize and admit them, where the evidence is properly before their eyes. There is no need of authority. There is no occasion to say 'Believe this, or you will be damned.' Truth carries its own witness with it, and an added denunciation would only suggest misgivings.

The conditions under which the propositions of a creed have found acceptance are singularly different: one man sees the force of the evidence for them; to another the evidence is no evidence at all. We are told that the heart must be in the right state, that there must be the gift of the Spirit, preventient grace, election, conversion, assurance, and one knows not what. The phraseology points in itself to something individual, to special favour bestowed upon this or that particular soul. Yet the phenomena of the world and of history will not fit into any such formula. The doctrines of the Reformation were not accepted by this person or rejected by that; but as if by some latent magnetism, they selected throughout Europe the Teutonic races, leaving the Celtic and Latin races, after a brief struggle, to Catholicism, and scarcely touching the Slavonic races at all. England and Scotland became Protestant; but the arguments which converted the Saxons failed to touch the Irish. When the war of freedom ended in the Low Countries, the seven Teutonic Provinces were independent and Calvinistic; while Celtic Belgium remained to Rome and Spain. France, in which Celtic and Frankish elements were combined, was convulsed for half a century. The country could not be divided, and the majority carried the day. But it is said the part taken by the great families in the wars of the League was determined by their blood: the Colignies, the Turennes, the Montgomeries, the Rochefoucaulds, all the leading Huguenots, were of German descent.

We are not to suppose that there was a second time a selection of a peculiar people. No respectable divine has ever held that the Teutonic race, as a race, were favoured with a special revelation. Nor has piety, or the peculiar grace of character which religion, and

only religion, bestows, been peculiar to them or their creed. There are saints and sinners among Latins as well as Teutons. There are saints and sinners among Catholics as well as Protestants. Each only has followed a spiritual type of its own. Something else has been at work besides either divine grace or outward evidence of truth, something which, for want of a better word, we must call spiritual affinity.

Nor is this all. Free-thought was once offered to the world in the form of Protestantism, but it was offered once only. Those who refused it then never seem to have had a second opportunity; and the subsequent rebellions of reason against authority have all taken the form of revolution. Protestantism has made no converts to speak of in Europe since the sixteenth century. It shot up in two generations to its full stature, and became an established creed with defined boundaries; and the many millions who in Catholic countries proclaim their indifference to their religion, either by neglect or contempt, do not now swell the congregations of Protestant church or conventicle. Their objections to the Church of Rome are objections equally to all forms of dogmatic and doctrinal Christianity. And so it has come about, that the old enemies are becoming friends in the presence of a common foe. Catholics speak tenderly of Protestants as keeping alive a belief in the creeds, and look forward to their return to the sheep-fold; while the old Antichrist, the Scarlet Woman on the Seven Hills, drunk with the blood of the saints, is now treated by Protestantism as an elder sister and a valiant ally in the great warfare with infidelity. The points of difference are forgotten; the points of union are passionately dwelt upon; and the remnants of idolatry which the more ardent English Protestants once abhorred and denounced, are now

regarded as having been providentially preserved as a means of making up the quarrel and bringing back the churches into communion. The dread of Popery is gone. The ceremonial system, once execrated as a service of Satan, is regarded as a thing at worst indifferent, perhaps in itself desirable; and even those who are conscious of no tendency to what they still call corruption, are practically forsaking the faith of their fathers, and re-establishing, so far as they can or dare, those very things which their fathers revolted against.

These phenomena seem to say that Protestantism, as a body of positive doctrine, was not a discovery or rediscovery of truth—of truth as it exists from eternity, independent of man's conception of it—but something temporary, something which the minds of men who were determined at all costs to have done with idolatry, threw out of themselves as a makeshift in the confusion—a passionate expression of their conviction that God was a spirit—to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and not with liturgies and formularies. In the desperate struggle for emancipation, their emotion took form in vehement and imaginative metaphors; and those metaphors, full of fire and force in an age which was in harmony with them, have become gradually, as times have changed, extravagant, unmeaning, and false. The outpourings of pious enthusiasm are addressed rather to the heart than to the head, and when taken out of their connection and shaped by cold theologians into articles of faith, they cannot stand the test, and fall to pieces.

Whence, then, came the original power of Protestantism? What was there about it which once had such extraordinary attraction for great and noble-minded men? Enthusiasm does not make heroes if it

is enthusiasm for illusion. Some great genuine truth there must have been at stake in that tremendous conflagration, or it would have burnt out like a fire of straw. Something indisputably there was which the descendants of the Reformers have forgotten, and have lost their strength in forgetting it. In the Protestantism of a Latimer or a Knox there were two constituents. The positive part of it was the affirmation of the elementary truth of all religions, the obligation of obedience to the law of moral duty; the second, or negative, part was a firm refusal to believe in lies; or to conceal or disguise their disbelief. All great spiritual movements have started under the same conditions. They have their period of youth and vitality, their period of established usefulness, and in turn their period of petrifaction. Creeds, by the very law of their being, stiffen in time into form. Wherever external ceremonial observances are supposed to be in themselves meritorious or efficacious, the weight of the matter is sooner or later cast upon them. To sacrifice our corrupt inclinations is disagreeable and difficult. To sacrifice bulls and goats in one age, to mutter paternosters and go to a priest for absolution in another, is simple and easy.

✓ Priests themselves encourage a tendency which gives them consequence and authority. They need not be conscious rogues, but their convictions go along with their interests, and they believe easily what they desire that others should believe. So the process goes on, the moral element growing weaker and weaker, and at last dying out altogether. Men lose their horror of sin when a private arrangement with a confessor will clear it away. Religion becomes a contrivance to enable them to live for pleasure, and to lose nothing by it; a hocus-pocus which God is supposed to have contrived to cheat the devil—a conglomerate of half-truths buried

in lies. As soon as this point is reached the catastrophe is not far off. Conscience does not sleep. The better sort of men perceive more or less clearly that they are living upon illusions. They may not see their way to anything better. They may go on for awhile in outward conformity, but sooner or later something occurs to make them speak, some unusually flagrant scandal, or some politically favourable opportunity for a change. A single voice has but to say the fitting word, and it is the voice not of one but of millions. In the hearts of all generous high-minded persons there is an instinctive hatred of falsehood: a sense that it is dreadful and horrible, and that they cannot and dare not bear with it. They had wanted bread and they were fed with stones—but the stones will not serve them longer, and they fall back on the original elementary moral certainties which are the natural food of their souls.

The negative element is usually that which at the beginning most occupies them, which constitutes at once their honour and their peril. The positive element is simple and rapidly summed up; nor in general does it contain the points for which the battle is being fought. The Reformers' chief business always is to destroy falsehood, to drag down the temple of imposture where idols hold the place of the Almighty.

The growth of Christianity at the beginning was precisely this. The early martyrs did not suffer for professing the name of Christ; the Emperor Adrian had no objection to placing Christ in the Pantheon; but they would not acknowledge the deities of the empire. They refused to call beings divine which were either demons or nothing. The first step in their conversion was the recognition that they were living in a lie, and the truth to which they bore wit-

ness in their deaths was not the mystery of the Incarnation, but simply that the gods of Greece and Rome were not gods at all. The thoughts of their Master and Saviour hovered before them in their tortures, and took from death its terrors; but they died, it cannot be too clearly remembered, for a negation. The last confession before the *prætor*, the words on which their fate depended, were not 'We do believe,' but 'We do not believe.' 'We will not to save our miserable lives take a lie between our lips, and say we think what we do not think.'

The Reformation was yet more emphatically destructive. The very name Protestant was a declaration of revolt. It commenced with the repudiation of pardons and indulgences; and the theory of the priesthood followed. The clergy professed to be a separate and sacred caste, to possess magical powers in virtue of their descent from the Apostles, and to be able to work invisible miracles by gestures and cabalistic sentences. The war passed rapidly to the central mystery of the Catholic faith. Heaven did not interfere, so the Church fought for it, and went to work sword in hand to chastise the innovators. Where they could not resist they died; and if we look over the trials of the Protestant confessors in Holland, France, or England, we find them condemned, not for their positive doctrines of election, justification, or irresistible grace—the Church would have let them say what they pleased about curious paradoxes, which would have added but fresh propositions to the creed and furnished fresh material for faith—the Church destroyed them for insisting that bread was bread and wine was wine, and that a priest was no more a *conjuror* than a layman. And then to serious persons like John Frederick, and Coligny, and William the

Silent, the question rose, should the Church be allowed to do this? While the debate turned on intricacies of theology, they were uncertain, and were inclined to stand still. These great men did not quarrel with transubstantiation as a mere theological opinion. They were unwilling to embroil Christendom for words. They would have left opinion free, and allowed the liberty to others which they demanded for themselves. The burnings and massacres forced them into a sterner attitude. When towns began to be sacked, and women ravished and buried alive, and men by tens of thousands hanged, shot, roasted, torn in pieces, and babies tossed upon the pikes of Romish crusaders, a cause had risen which might well command the sympathies of every brave man; the cause of humanity against theology, the cause of God against the devil. It is idle to say that the Catholic cruelties of the sixteenth century rose from the spirit of the age. If the plea were true, the Papacy could not be held excused, for the Papacy claims to be inspired by God, and not by the temper of the times. But the age was not cruel till the Church made it so. The Reformers, before they were persecuted, never sought or desired more for themselves than toleration; they demanded merely permission to think and speak their own thoughts. If in isolated cases extreme fanatics followed the atrocious examples of the Catholics, it was because they had not wholly shaken off the spirit of the creed in which they had been bred. But the judicial murders which can be laid to the charge of Protestants are as units where the Church is responsible for thousands.

On obscure subjects on which certain knowledge is impossible, it is at once inevitable and desirable that men should have different opinions. Such truth as we

can hope to obtain on these matters is advanced and protected by discussion, and theological schools are not to be allowed to compensate by violence for the absence or weakness of argument. That we should not be forced at the sword's point by a so-called authority to say that we believe what we do not believe, and deny the intelligence which God has given us,—this is what we have a right to demand, and Protestantism, if the same circumstances return, will again command our allegiance as heartily as ever. But the history of it tells us the secret of its strength as well as of its weakness. When the power to persecute was taken from the Church, when Protestantism became a system of positive opinion, contending for supremacy as soon as it had achieved toleration, when it showed a disposition to revive in its own favour the methods from which it had suffered, the tide which had carried it to victory ceased to flow. From that time forward it was contending for no great principle. It was contending only for its own formulas, which may or may not be true, but which are not proved to be true; and, by parallel necessity, the weakness of the two creeds has developed side by side. As Rome ceased to tyrannize from want of power, the positive Protestant lost the noblest of his allies, and lost hold in himself of the real principles for which the battle of the Reformation had been fought.

The Reformer of the sixteenth century denied the power of the keys. It was decided that for himself and those who went with him, he had a right to say what he thought: but he obtained no right to punish by disabilities or otherwise his neighbour who continued to believe in the keys; and his own theories of justification were of little moment to those who preferred to remain in suspense on matters beyond com-

prehension. Luther, on the other hand, might have taught justification by faith if he would have left the priesthood alone, just as the priests might have gone on teaching their own doctrines as long as they could get a congregation to listen to them, if the Inquisition would have left the Protestants alone. The evil element in Catholicism which made good men so detest it, was not that it held a theory of its own on the relation between God and man, but that it murdered everybody who would not agree with it. The work of the Reformation was done when speculative opinion was declared free. The lay intelligence of the world cares at all times more for justice than theology, and it left the Protestants to fight their own battles with their own arguments, as soon as it had secured them fair play.

The contrast between the negative and positive principles—the power of the first and the weakness of the second—has become increasingly apparent in every successive generation.

As long as Jesuitism continued powerful in Spain and Austria—as long as the old régime was maintained in France, and want of orthodoxy in Catholic countries was directly or indirectly treated as a crime—the cause of Protestantism was more or less the cause of liberty. The revolutions at the close of the eighteenth century completed the work of the sixteenth. The last poison fangs of the old serpent were drawn; it was left a harmless creature whose crimes were things of the past; and it became venerable to sentimentalism for its feebleness and its antiquity. Other questions arose to agitate the intellect of the thinking portion of mankind, which timid Protestants found as dangerous to their own speculations as they were dangerous to what was left of Romanism. They forgot their ancient abhorrence

of falsehood. Propositions which they came into being to deny have become more tolerable to them than a further advance on the road to freedom. They have quarrelled with their best friends. They have ceased to protest; and on many sides, and in a thousand subtle ways, they are making advances to their old antagonist, and endeavouring to unite their forces with his against 'the infidel spirit of the age.'

The sacramental system means something, or it means nothing. It is true, or it is false. The English Evangelicals used to answer in clear ringing tones for the second alternative. There was no playing with words, no sentiment, no mystification. They insisted sternly and firmly that material forms were not and could not be a connecting link between God and the human soul. The English High Churchman was less decided in his words, but scarcely less so in his practice. He was contented to use the ambiguous formulas which the Reformation left in the Liturgy; but he confined his 'celebrations' to four times a year. He regarded the Anglican ceremonial generally rather as something established by law which it was his business to carry out than as a set of rites to which he attached a meaning. High Churchmen have discovered now that the mystic body in the Eucharist is in the hands as well as the heart of the believer. They pine for more frequent communions as the food of their spiritual existence. They are gliding rapidly into the positive affirmation of the doctrine which Latimer and Ridley were executed for denying. The Evangelicals shrink from being behindhand. They have lost confidence in themselves; they play with mysticism, and admit that things untrue in one sense may be true in another. They are patching their garments from the rags which their fathers cast away, anxious rather to maintain their party than

their principles, as the Tories steal the policy of the Radicals to keep their Cabinet in office.

The predominant feature in the English Reformation was the abridgment of the special prerogatives of the clergy. From a position of almost supremacy, they were reduced into the servants of the State. They were made to feel that they were not a separate order deriving their authority from the Apostles, and raised above the laity by privileges or prerogative or special spiritual powers, but were a part of the general community, with particular duties to perform. And they had learnt their lesson. They had come at last, after many vicissitudes, to understand and accept the new order of things. Men now in middle life remember the rector of their childhood as a higher kind of squire —and often combining the two characters. He was justice of the peace ; he took his share in general local business ; he attended sessions and county meetings ; he farmed his glebe or his estate ; he was to all intents and purposes a well educated, country gentleman, with a higher moral standard than the laity round him, fulfilling admirably well the obligations of his station, and possessed of all the influence which naturally belonged to it.

The type is fast changing, and will soon be extinct —much for the better, as we are told in newspapers and bishops' charges. The clergy of all persuasions attend now exclusively to their spiritual functions. The incumbent of — is no longer to be seen, like his predecessors, on the board of magistrates in the next town. He is reading daily service at his church ; he is at the Convocation House at Westminster ; he is making speeches at a missionary meeting, or addressing his diocesan on the enormities of Bishop Colenso. He wears a long coat and a peculiar waistcoat, and curtails

his shirt collars. He cuts his apparel as near as he dares after the Catholic fashion, and aspires to match the priest at his own weapons. He is once more professional. He is one of an order which he hopes to restore to its dignities, and he looks back on the secular parson, who hunted and shot and went to cricket-matches and election dinners, as a monster of the dark ages. The secular parson shared the pleasures as well as the occupations of his neighbour. He was no better than a layman. The modern clergy prefer the earlier condition, and desire to be once more a priesthood. We hear of few moral scandals among them. They are, as a class, devoted, self-sacrificing, hard-worked men, and, in an age more than ever given up to money-making, they are contented with the wages of an upper servant. But what they lose in secular position they aspire to recover in spiritual authority ; and whatever else we may conjecture about their future, it is quite certain that they will not long remain members of a Church established and governed by the State. Either they must drop their pretensions, or the Established Church will cease to be. They may preach more doctrine than their fathers ; it may be that they preach more truth ; but they know infinitely less of the people under their charge ; and they in turn are less appreciated by their people. There are no longer independent points of contact between men who have no common occupations ; and in town and country, notwithstanding the multiplication of churches, the revival of architecture, the religious newspapers and magazines, and the increased talk about religion everywhere, the practical influence of the clergy diminishes daily, and they know it is so, and know not why it is.

To those who like ourselves have no expectation of any good coming to us either from politics or science,

unless statesmen and philosophers have some kind of faith in God, the outlook is not a happy one. The reaction towards Romanism, Anglo-Catholicism, or whatever it is called, is probably temporary—a mere eddy in the tide. It would not have arisen among us at all, except for the ignorance of modern history, which still accompanies our highest education. The Calvinistic and Lutheran Reformation agreed on one point at least—that the magical power supposed to belong to the clergy had no existence. It treated their absolution as imposture. It regarded their sacraments in the form which they had assumed, as mere idolatry, their whole conception of Christianity as false from the root. It is now pretended that in England the priest theory was retained in a modified form, and people who hold that theory maintain that the English Church is a great deal nearer Rome than to the Presbyterians or continental Protestants.

It is certain, nevertheless, that however politicians for state purposes might choose to adjust the Anglican organization, there would have been no such thing as the English Reformation, except for those among us who did not believe in priests at all.

The first step of the English Parliament was to break the spine of sacerdotal assumption. They allowed its ghost to hover about the service-book, but on condition that it should never take substantial form again. Nor can England be separated in any real sense from the reformed States abroad. English, Dutch, French, Germans fought side by side for the liberties of Europe, against an enemy which neither acknowledged nor acknowledges that there is any distinction between them. If England was in any way singled out, it was as the country where the Protestant heresy had taken strongest and deepest root. Had Protestantism been trampled

down in Holland and Germany, the apostolic succession of her bishops would not have saved England from the same fate ; and as a feature in the religious history of mankind, the Reformation everywhere must be considered as one movement. If it was a good thing, all who broke off from Rome shared the honour ; if it was an evil thing, all were equally guilty.

Are we then to believe that the Reformation was an evil thing ? Let us have a plain answer. If Dr Pusey will not tell us, we must appeal to general intelligence. Looking at the deeds that were done in the sixteenth century, and at the men who did them—looking at the character of the leaders on both sides, on the conditions of the struggle, and on the spirit in which the battle was fought out—can a doubt, we ask, be fairly entertained on which side the right was lying ? A Catholic who has been bred up in the atmosphere of his creed, who has learned history from Lingard and Audin, and whose later studies have been controlled by the Index, may entertain an unshaken faith in the immaculate Church, which can err neither in judgment nor in action. A Howard or a Ker may cling to a cause for which his ancestors fought and suffered, which is identified with the traditions of his family, which at one time was the cause of the aristocracy against the Revolution. But when educated Protestants turn Romanists or Anglo-Catholics, and profess to hate the Reformation, they imply that they regard Coligny as a rebellious schismatic, and Catherine de Medici and her litter of hyæna cubs as on the side of providence and justice ; they take part with a Duke of Alva against William the Silent, with Mary Stuart against Knox and Murray. And such a phenomenon, we repeat, can only be explained by the system of instruction at our English Universities, where we are taught accurately the con-

stitution of Servius Tullius, but where we never hear of the Act of Supremacy, and find it an open question whether Latimer was not a raving fanatic, and Cranmer a sycophant and a scoundrel.

Let there be no mistake about this. Not only those who are becoming Catholics, but those also who are setting the Church of England upon stilts, and praying for the reunion of Christendom, must equally condemn the Reformation. They regard the Continental Protestant as a schismatic, and his revolt from the Catholic Church as a crime. The Anglo-Catholics palliate the separation of their own Church of England, on the plea merely that it was kept providentially from lapsing into heresy, and they do not care to conceal their contempt and hate for the persons of the Reformers. Yet, all this time, the so-called 'horrors of the French Revolution' were a mere bagatelle, a mere summer shower, by the side of the atrocities committed in the name of religion, and with the sanction of the Catholic Church.

The Jacobin Convention of 1793-4 may serve as a measure to show how mild are the most ferocious of mere human beings when compared to an exasperated priesthood. By the September massacre, by the guillotine, by the fusillade at Lyons, and by the drownings on the Loire, five thousand men and women at the utmost suffered a comparatively easy death. Multiply the five thousand by ten, and you do not reach the number of those who were murdered in France alone in the two months of August and September, 1572. Fifty thousand Flemings and Germans are said to have been hanged, burnt, or buried alive under Charles the Fifth. Add to this the long agony of the Netherlands in the revolt from Philip, the Thirty Years' War in Germany, the ever-recurring massacres of the

Huguenots, and remember that the Catholic religion alone was at the bottom of all these horrors, that the crusades against the Huguenots especially, were solemnly sanctioned by successive popes, and that no word of censure ever issued from the Vatican except in the brief intervals when statesmen and soldiers grew weary of bloodshed, and looked for means to admit the heretics to grace.

With this infernal business before men's eyes, it requires no common intellectual courage to believe that God was on the side of the people who did such things—to believe that He allowed His cause to be defended by devils—while He permitted also good and brave men, who had originally no sympathy with Protestantism, to be driven into it by the horrible fruits of the old creed.

If this be true, then indeed, as an Oxford Professor tells us, our human conceptions of justice and goodness are no measure of what those words mean when applied to God. Then indeed we are in worse case than if the throne of heaven was empty, and we had no Lord and Father there at all. 'I had rather be an atheist,' says Bacon, 'than believe in a god who devours his children.' The blackest ogre in a Negro fetish is a benevolent angel compared to a god who can be supposed to have sanctioned the massacre of St Bartholomew.

It is an old story that men make God after their own image. Their conception of His nature reflects only their own passions. Theological fury in the sixteenth century turned human creatures into fiends, and they in turn made God into a fiend also. The Neo-Catholics of our own day, while they will not disclaim the God of Gregory XIII., have softened the outlines, but have failed to add to its dignity. The

divinity of the Ritualistic imagination abandons the world and all its pursuits, cares nothing for the efforts of science to unfold the mysteries of the creation, or to remove the primeval curse by the amelioration of the condition of humanity—all these it leaves to the unconverted man. It takes delight in incense, and ceremonies, and fine churches, and an extended episcopate, and for the rest is occupied in its own world, and in helping priests to work invisible miracles. The Evangelical, far nobler than these, yet embarrassed still with his doctrines of reprobation, forms a theory which has some lineaments of superhuman beauty, but unable to rid himself of the savage element left behind by Calvin, offers us a Saviour at once all merciful and without mercy—a Saviour whose pity will not reject the darkest sinner from His grace, yet to those whose perplexed minds cannot accept as absolutely and exhaustively true the 'scheme of salvation' deals harder measure than the Holy Office of Seville. The heretic, in the *auto-da-fé*, endured but a few moments of agony. The Calvinist preacher consigns him without a shudder to an eternity of flames. *Faith* is the cry of all theologians, Believe with us and you will be saved; refuse to believe and you are lost. Yet they know nothing of what belief means. They dogmatize but they fail to persuade, and they are entangled in the old dilemma which faith alone can encounter and despise. 'Aut non vult tollere malum aut nequit. Si non vult, non est bonus; si nequit, non est omnipotens.'

In the present alienation of the higher intellect from religion it is impossible to foresee how soon or from what quarter any better order of things is to be looked for. We spoke of an eddy in the stream, but there are 'tides in the affairs of men' which run long

and far. The phenomena of Spirit-rapping show us that the half-educated multitudes in England and America are ready for any superstition. Scientific culture seems inclined to run after the Will-o'-the-wisp of Positivism ; and as it is certain that ordinary persons will not live without a belief of some kind, superstition has a fair field before it, and England, if not Europe generally, may perhaps witness in the coming century some great Catholic revival. It is a possibility which the decline of Protestantism compels us to contemplate, and it is more easy to foresee the ultimate result than the means by which its returning influence can be effectually combated. Catholicism has learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. It is tolerant now because its strength is broken. It has been fighting for bare existence, and its demands at present are satisfied with fair play. But let it once have a numerical majority behind it and it will reclaim its old authority. It will again insist on controlling all departments of knowledge. The principles on which it persecuted it still professes, and persecution will grow again as naturally and necessarily as a seed in a congenial soil. Then it will once more come in collision with the secular intelligence which now passes by it with disdain. The struggle ended in blood before ; and it will end in blood again, with further results not difficult to anticipate.

We are indulging, perhaps, in visionary fears, but if experience shows that in the long run reason will prevail, it shows also that reason has a hard fight for it ; and in the minds even of the most thoughtful rarely holds an undisputed empire. We expect no good from the theory of human things with which men of intellect at present content themselves. We look for little satisfaction to our souls from sciences which are satisfied

with phenomena, or much good to our bodies from social theories of utility—utility meaning the gratification of the five senses in largest measure by the greatest number. We believe that human beings can only live and prosper together on the condition of the recognition of *duty*, and duty has no meaning and no sanction except as implying responsibility to a power above and beyond humanity. As long as the moral force bequeathed to us by Christianity remains, the idea of obligation survives in the conscience. The most emancipated philosopher is still dominated by its influence, and men continue substantially Christians while they believe themselves to be only Benthamites. But the feebleness of Protestantism will do its work of disintegration at last, and a social system which has no religion left in it will break down like an uncemented arch.

We have no hope from theologians, to whatever school they may belong. They and all belonging to them are given over to their own dreams, and they cling to them with a passion proportionate to the weakness of their arguments.

There is yet a hope—it is but a faint one—that the laity, who are neither divines nor philosophers, may take the matter into their own hands, as they did at the Reformation. If Catholicism can revive, far more may Protestantism revive, if only it can recover the spirit which gave it birth. Religion may yet be separated from opinion, and brought back to life. For fixed opinions on questions beyond our reach, we may yet exchange the certainties of human duty; and no longer trusting ourselves to so-called economic laws, which are no more laws than it is a law that an unweeded garden becomes a wilderness of stinging nettles, we may place practical religion once more on

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the throne of society. There may lie before us a future of moral progress which will rival or eclipse our material splendour; or that material splendour itself may be destined to perish in revolution. Which of these two fates lies now before us depends on the attitude of the English laity towards theological controversy in the present and the next generation.

ENGLAND'S FORGOTTEN WORTHIES.¹

THE Reformation, the Antipodes, the American Continent, the Planetary system, and the infinite deep of the Heavens, have now become common and familiar facts to us. Globes and orries are the playthings of our school-days ; we inhale the spirit of Protestantism with our earliest breath of consciousness. It is all but impossible to throw back our imagination into the time when, as new grand discoveries, they stirred every mind which they touched with awe and wonder at the revelation which God had sent down among mankind. Vast spiritual and material continents lay for the first time displayed, opening fields of thought and fields of enterprise of which none could conjecture the limit. Old routine was broken up. Men were thrown back on their own strength and their own power, unshackled to accomplish whatever they might dare. And although we do not speak of these discoveries as the cause of that enormous force of heart and intellect which accompanied them (for they were as much the effect as the cause, and one reacted on the other), yet at any rate they afforded scope and room for the play of powers which, without such scope, let them have been as transcendent as they

¹ *Westminster Review*, 1852.

would, must have passed away unproductive and blighted.

An earnest faith in the supernatural, an intensely real conviction of the divine and devilish forces by which the universe was guided and misguided, was the inheritance of the Elizabethan age from Catholic Christianity. The fiercest and most lawless men did then really and truly believe in the actual personal presence of God or the devil in every accident, or scene, or action. They brought to the contemplation of the new heaven and the new earth an imagination saturated with the spiritual convictions of the old era, which were not lost, but only infinitely expanded. The planets, whose vastness they now learnt to recognize, were, therefore, only the more powerful for evil or for good; the tides were the breathing of Demogorgon; and the idolatrous American tribes were real worshippers of the real devil, and were assisted with the full power of his evil army.

It is a form of thought which, however in a vague and general way we may continue to use its phraseology, has become, in its detailed application to life, utterly strange to us. We congratulate ourselves on the enlargement of our understanding when we read the decisions of grave law courts in cases of supposed witchcraft: we smile complacently over Raleigh's story of the island of the Amazons, and rejoice that we are not such as he—entangled in the cobwebs of effete and foolish superstition. Yet the true conclusion is less flattering to our vanity. That Raleigh and Bacon could believe what they believed, and could be what they were notwithstanding, is to us a proof that the injury which such mistakes can inflict is unspeakably insignificant: and arising, as those mistakes arose, from a never-failing sense of the real awfulness and

mystery of the world and of the life of human souls upon it, they witness to the presence in such minds of a spirit, the loss of which not the most perfect acquaintance with every law by which the whole creation moves can compensate. We wonder at the grandeur, the moral majesty of some of Shakespeare's characters, so far beyond what the noblest among ourselves can imitate, and at first thought we attribute it to the genius of the poet, who has outstripped nature in his creations. But we are misunderstanding the power and the meaning of poetry in attributing creativeness to it in any such sense. Shakespeare created, but only as the spirit of nature created around him, working in him as it worked abroad in those among whom he lived. The men whom he draws were such men as he saw and knew ; the words they utter were such as he heard in the ordinary conversations in which he joined. At the Mermaid with Raleigh and with Sidney, and at a thousand unnamed English firesides, he found the living originals for his Prince Hals, his Orlando, his Antonios, his Portias, his Isabellas. The closer personal acquaintance which we can form with the English of the age of Elizabeth, the more we are satisfied that Shakespeare's great poetry is no more than the rhythmic echo of the life which it depicts.

It was, therefore, with no little interest that we heard of the formation of a society which was to employ itself, as we understood, in republishing in accessible form some, if not all, of the invaluable records compiled or composed by Richard Hakluyt. Books, like everything else, have their appointed death-day : the souls of them, unless they be found worthy of a second birth in a new body, perish with the paper in which they lived ; and the early folio Hakluyts, not from their own want of merit, but from our neglect

of them, were expiring of old age. The five-volume quarto edition, published in 1811, so little people then cared for the exploits of their ancestors, consisted but of 270 copies. It was intended for no more than for curious antiquaries, or for the great libraries, where it could be consulted as a book of reference ; and among a people, the greater part of whom had never heard Hakluyt's name, the editors are scarcely to be blamed if it never so much as occurred to them that general readers would care to have the book within their reach.

And yet those five volumes may be called the Prose Epic of the modern English nation. They contain the heroic tales of the exploits of the great men in whom the new era was inaugurated ; not mythic, like the Iliads and the Eddas, but plain broad narratives of substantial facts, which rival legend in interest and grandeur. What the old epics were to the royally or nobly born, this modern epic is to the common people. We have no longer kings or princes for chief actors, to whom the heroism like the dominion of the world had in time past been confined. But, as it was in the days of the Apostles, when a few poor fishermen from an obscure lake in Palestine assumed, under the Divine mission, the spiritual authority over mankind, so, in the days of our own Elizabeth, the seamen from the banks of the Thames and the Avon, the Plym and the Dart, self-taught and self-directed, with no impulse but what was beating in their own royal hearts, went out across the unknown seas fighting, discovering, colonizing, and graved out the channels, paving them at last with their bones, through which the commerce and enterprise of England has flowed out over all the world. We can conceive nothing, not the songs of Homer himself, which would be read among us with

more enthusiastic interest than these plain massive tales ; and a people's edition of them in these days, when the writings of Ainsworth and Eugène Sue circulate in tens of thousands, would perhaps be the most blessed antidote which could be bestowed upon us. The heroes themselves were the men of the people—the Joneses, the Smiths, the Davises, the Drakes ; and no courtly pen, with the one exception of Raleigh, lent its polish or its varnish to set them off. In most cases the captain himself, or his clerk or servant, or some unknown gentleman volunteer sat down and chronicled the voyage which he had shared ; and thus inorganically arose a collection of writings which, with all their simplicity are for nothing more striking than for the high moral beauty, warmed with natural feeling, which displays itself through all their pages. With us, the sailor is scarcely himself beyond his quarter-deck. If he is distinguished in his profession, he is professional merely ; or if he is more than that, he owes it not to his work as a sailor, but to independent domestic culture. With them, their profession was the school of their nature, a high moral education which most brought out what was most nobly human in them ; and the wonders of earth, and air, and sea, and sky, were a real intelligible language in which they heard Almighty God speaking to them.

That such hopes of what might be accomplished by the Hakluyt Society should in some measure be disappointed, is only what might naturally be anticipated of all very sanguine expectation. Cheap editions are expensive editions to the publisher ; and historical societies, from a necessity which appears to encumber all corporate English action, rarely fail to do their work expensively and infelicitously. Yet, after

all allowances and deductions, we cannot reconcile ourselves to the mortification of having found but one volume in the series to be even tolerably edited, and that one to be edited by a gentleman to whom England is but an adopted country—Sir Robert Schombrugk. Raleigh's 'Conquest of Guiana,' with Sir Robert's sketch of Raleigh's history and character, form in everything but its cost a very model of an excellent volume. For the remaining editors,¹ we are obliged to say that they have exerted themselves successfully to paralyze whatever interest was reviving in Hakluyt, and to consign their own volumes to the same obscurity to which time and accident were consigning the earlier editions. Very little which was really noteworthy escaped the industry of Hakluyt himself, and we looked to find reprints of the most remarkable of the stories which were to be found in his collection. The editors began unfortunately with proposing to continue the work where he had left it, and to produce narratives hitherto unpublished of other voyages of inferior interest, or not of English origin. Better thoughts appear to have occurred to them in the course of the work; but their evil destiny overtook them before their thoughts could get themselves executed. We opened one volume with eagerness, bearing the title of 'Voyages to the North-west,' in hope of finding our old friends Davis and Frobisher. We found a vast unnecessary Editor's Preface: and instead of the voyages themselves, which with their picturesqueness and moral beauty shine among the fairest jewels in the diamond mine of Hakluyt, we encountered an analysis and digest of their results, which Milton was called in to justify in an inappropriate quotation. It is much as if they had undertaken to edit 'Bacon's

¹ This essay was written 15 years ago.

Essays,' and had retailed what they conceived to be the substance of them in their own language ; strangely failing to see that the real value of the actions or the thoughts of remarkable men does not lie in the material result which can be gathered from them, but in the heart and soul of the actors or speakers themselves. Consider what Homer's 'Odyssey' would be, reduced into an analysis.

The editor of the 'Letters of Columbus' apologizes for the rudeness of the old seaman's phraseology. Columbus, he tells us, was not so great a master of the pen as of the art of navigation. We are to make excuses for him. We are put on our guard, and warned not to be offended, before we are introduced to the sublime record of sufferings under which a man of the highest order was staggering towards the end of his earthly calamities ; although the inarticulate fragments in which his thought breaks out from him, are strokes of natural art by the side of which literary pathos is poor and meaningless.

And even in the subjects which they select they are pursued by the same curious fatality. Why is Drake to be best known, or to be only known, in his last voyage ? Why pass over the success, and endeavour to immortalize the failure ? When Drake climbed the tree in Panamá, and saw both oceans, and vowed that he would sail a ship in the Pacific ; when he crawled out upon the cliffs of Terra del Fuego and leaned his head over the southernmost angle of the world ; when he scored a furrow round the globe with his keel, and received the homage of the barbarians of the antipodes in the name of the Virgin Queen, he was another man from what he had become after twenty years of court life and intrigue, and Spanish fighting and gold-hunting. There is a tragic solemnity in his end, if we take

it as the last act of his career ; but it is his life, not his death, which we desire—not what he failed to do, but what he did.

But every bad has a worse below it, and more offensive than all these is the editor of Hawkins's 'Voyage to the South Sea.' The narrative is striking in itself ; not one of the best, but very good ; and, as it is republished complete, we can fortunately read it through, carefully shutting off Captain Bethune's notes with one hand, and we shall then find in it the same beauty which breathes in the tone of all the writings of the period.

It is a record of misfortune, but of misfortune which did no dishonour to him who sunk under it ; and there is a melancholy dignity in the style in which Hawkins tells his story, which seems to say, that though he had been defeated, and had never again an opportunity of winning back his lost laurels, he respects himself still for the heart with which he endured a shame which would have broken a smaller man. It would have required no large exertion of editorial self-denial to have abstained from marring the pages with puns of which 'Punch' would be ashamed, and with the vulgar affectation of patronage with which the sea captain of the nineteenth century condescends to criticize and approve of his half-barbarous precursor. And what excuse can we find for such an offence as this which follows ?—The war of freedom of the Araucan Indians is the most gallant episode in the history of the New World. The Spaniards themselves were not behindhand in acknowledging the chivalry before which they quailed, and after many years of ineffectual efforts, they gave up a conflict which they never afterwards resumed ; leaving the Araucans alone, of all the American races with which they came in contact, a liberty which they were unable to tear from

them. It is a subject for an epic poem ; and whatever admiration is due to the heroism of a brave people whom no inequality of strength could appal and no defeats could crush, these poor Indians have a right to demand of us. The story of the war was well known in Europe : Hawkins, in coasting the western shores of South America, fell in with them, and the finest passage in his book is the relation of one of the incidents of the war :—

An Indian captain was taken prisoner by the Spaniards, and for that he was of name, and known to have done his devoir against them, they cut off his hands, thereby intending to disenable him to fight any more against them. But he, returning home, desirous to revenge this injury, to maintain his liberty, with the reputation of his nation, and to help to banish the Spaniard, with his tongue intreated and incited them to persevere in their accustomed valour and reputation, abasing the enemy and advancing his nation ; condemning their contraries of cowardliness, and confirming it by the cruelty used with him and other his companions in their mishaps ; showing them his arms without hands, and naming his brethren whose half feet they had cut off, because they might be unable to sit on horseback ; with force arguing that if they feared them not, they would not have used so great inhumanity—for fear produceth cruelty, the companion of cowardice. Thus encouraged he them to fight for their lives, limbs, and liberty, choosing rather to die an honourable death fighting, than to live in servitude as fruitless members of the commonwealth. Thus using the office of a sergeant-major, and having loaden his two stumps with bundles of arrows, he succoured them who, in the succeeding battle, had their store wasted ; and changing himself from place to place, animated and encouraged his countrymen with such comfortable persuasions, as it is reported and credibly believed, that he did more good with his words and presence, without striking a stroke, than a great part of the army did with fighting to the utmost.

It is an action which may take its place by the side of the myth of Mucius Scaevola, or the real exploit of that brother of the poet *Æschylus*, who, when the Persians were flying from Marathon, clung to a ship till both his hands were hewn away, and then seized it with his teeth, leaving his name as a portent even in the splendid calendar of Athenian heroes. Captain

Bethune, without call or need, making his notes, merely, as he tells us, from the suggestions of his own mind as he revised the proof-sheets, informs us, at the bottom of the page, that it reminds him of the familiar lines—

For Widdrington I needs must wail,
As one in doleful dumps;
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps.

It must not avail him, that he has but quoted from the ballad of Chevy Chase. It is the most deformed stanza¹ of the modern deformed version which was composed in the eclipse of heart and taste, on the restoration of the Stuarts; and if such verses could then pass for serious poetry, they have ceased to sound in any ear as other than a burlesque; the associations which they arouse are only absurd, and they could only have continued to ring in his memory through their ludicrous doggrel.

When to these offences of the Society we add, that in the long laboured appendices and introductions, which fill up valuable space, which increase the expense of the edition, and into reading which many readers are, no doubt, betrayed, we have found nothing which assists the understanding of the stories which they are supposed to illustrate—when we have declared that we have found what is most uncommon passed without notice, and what is most trite and familiar encumbered with comment—we have unpacked our hearts of the bitterness which these volumes

¹ Here is the old stanza. Let whoever is disposed to think us too hard on Captain Bethune compare them :—

'For Wetharrington my harte was woe,
That even he slayne sholde be;
For when both his leggis were hewen in to,
He knyled and fought on his knee.'

Even Percy, who, on the whole, thinks well of the modern ballad, gives up this stanza as hopeless.

have aroused in us, and can now take our leave of them and go on with our more grateful subject.

Elizabeth, whose despotism was as peremptory as that of the Plantagenets, and whose ideas of the English constitution were limited in the highest degree, was, notwithstanding, more beloved by her subjects than any sovereign before or since. It was because, substantially, she was the people's sovereign ; because it was given to her to conduct the outgrowth of the national life through its crisis of change, and the weight of her great mind and her great place were thrown on the people's side. She was able to paralyze the dying efforts with which, if a Stuart had been on the throne, the representatives of an effete system might have made the struggle a deadly one ; and the history of England is not the history of France, because the resolution of one person held the Reformation firm till it had rooted itself in the heart of the nation, and could not be again overthrown. The Catholic faith was no longer able to furnish standing ground on which the English or any other nation could live a manly and a godly life. Feudalism, as a social organization, was not any more a system under which their energies could have scope to move. Thenceforward, not the Catholic Church, but any man to whom God had given a heart to feel and a voice to speak, was to be the teacher to whom men were to listen ; and great actions were not to remain the privilege of the families of the Norman nobles, but were to be laid within the reach of the poorest plebeian who had the stuff in him to perform them. Alone, of all the sovereigns in Europe, Elizabeth saw the change which had passed over the world. She saw it, and saw it in faith, and accepted it. The England of the Catholic Hierarchy and the Norman Baron, was

✓ to cast its shell and to become the England of free thought and commerce and manufacture, which was to plough the ocean with its navies, and sow its colonies over the globe ; and the first appearance of these enormous forces and the light of the earliest achievements of the new era shines through the forty years of the reign of Elizabeth with a grandeur which, when once its history is written, will be seen to be among the most sublime phenomena which the earth as yet has witnessed. The work was not of her creation ; the heart of the whole English nation was stirred to its depths ; and Elizabeth's place was to recognize, to love, to foster, and to guide. The Government originated nothing ; at such a time it was neither necessary nor desirable that it should do so ; but wherever expensive enterprises were on foot which promised ultimate good, and doubtful immediate profit, we never fail to find among the lists of contributors the Queen's Majesty, Burghley, Leicester, Walsingham. Never chary of her presence, for Elizabeth could afford to condescend, when ships were fitting in the river for distant voyages, the Queen would go down in her barge and inspect. Frobisher, who was but a poor sailor adventurer, sees her wave her handkerchief to him from the Greenwich Palace windows, and he brings her home a narwhal's horn for a present. She honoured her people, and her people loved her ; and the result was that, with no cost to the Government, she saw them scattering the fleets of the Spaniards, planting America with colonies, and exploring the most distant seas. Either for honour or for expectation of profit, or from that unconscious necessity by which a great people, like a great man, will do what is right, and must do it at the right time, whoever had the means to furnish a ship, and whoever had the

talent to command one, laid their abilities together and went out to pioneer, and to conquer, and to take possession, in the name of the Queen of the Sea. There was no nation so remote but what some one or other was found ready to undertake an expedition there, in the hope of opening a trade; and, let them go where they would, they were sure of Elizabeth's countenance. We find letters written by her, for the benefit of nameless adventurers, to every potentate of whom she had ever heard—to the Emperors of China, Japan, and India, the Grand Duke of Russia, the Grand Turk, the Persian 'Sofee,' and other unheard-of Asiatic and African princes; whatever was to be done in England, or by Englishmen, Elizabeth assisted when she could, and admired when she could not.

The springs of great actions are always difficult to analyze—impossible to analyze perfectly—possible to analyze only very proximately; and the force by which a man throws a good action out of himself is invisible and mystical, like that which brings out the blossom and the fruit upon the tree. The motives which we find men urging for their enterprises seem often insufficient to have prompted them to so large a daring. They did what they did from the great unrest in them which made them do it, and what it was may be best measured by the results in the present England and America.

Nevertheless, there was enough in the state of the world, and in the position of England, to have furnished abundance of conscious motive, and to have stirred the drowsiest minister of routine.

Among material occasions for exertion, the population began to outgrow the employment, and there was a necessity for plantations to serve as an outlet. Men who, under happier circumstances, might have

led decent lives, and done good service, were now driven by want to desperate courses—‘witness,’ as Richard Hakluyt says, ‘twenty tall fellows hanged last Rochester assizes for small robberies;’ and there is an admirable paper addressed to the Privy Council by Christopher Carlile, Walsingham’s son-in-law, pointing out the possible openings to be made in or through such plantations for home produce and manufacture.

Far below all such prudential economies and mercantile ambitions, however, lay a chivalrous enthusiasm which in these dull days we can hardly, without an effort, realize. The life-and-death wrestle between the Reformation and the old religion had settled in the last quarter of the sixteenth century into a permanent struggle between England and Spain. France was disabled. All the help which Elizabeth could spare barely enabled the Netherlands to defend themselves. Protestantism, if it conquered, must conquer on another field; and by the circumstances of the time the championship of the Reformed faith fell to the English sailors. The sword of Spain was forged in the gold-mines of Peru; the legions of Alva were only to be disarmed by intercepting the gold ships on their passage; and, inspired by an enthusiasm like that which four centuries before had precipitated the chivalry of Europe upon the East, the same spirit which in its present degeneracy covers our bays and rivers with pleasure yachts, then fitted out armed privateers, to sweep the Atlantic, and plunder and destroy Spanish ships wherever they could meet them.

Thus, from a combination of causes, the whole force and energy of the age was directed towards the sea. The wide excitement, and the greatness of the interests at stake, raised even common men above themselves; and people who in ordinary times would

have been no more than mere seamen, or mere money-making merchants, appear before us with a largeness and greatness of heart and mind in which their duties to God and their country are alike clearly and broadly seen and felt to be paramount to every other.

Ordinary English traders we find fighting Spanish war ships in behalf of the Protestant faith. The cruisers of the Spanish main were full of generous eagerness for the conversion of the savage nations to Christianity. And what is even more surprising, sites for colonization were examined and scrutinized by such men in a lofty statesmanlike spirit, and a ready insight was displayed by them into the indirect effects of a wisely-extended commerce on every highest human interest.

Again, in the conflict with the Spaniards, there was a further feeling, a feeling of genuine chivalry, which was spurring on the English, and one which must be well understood and well remembered, if men like Drake, and Hawkins, and Raleigh are to be tolerably understood. One of the English Reviews, a short time ago, was much amused with a story of Drake having excommunicated a petty officer as a punishment for some moral offence; the reviewer not being able to see in Drake, as a man, anything more than a highly brave and successful buccaneer, whose pretences to religion might rank with the devotion of an Italian bandit to the Madonna. And so Hawkins, and even Raleigh, are regarded by superficial persons, who see only such outward circumstances of their history as correspond with their own impressions. The high nature of these men, and the high objects which they pursued, will only rise out and become visible to us as we can throw ourselves back into their times and teach our hearts to feel as they felt. We do not find in the language of

the voyagers themselves, or of those who lent them their help at home, any of that weak watery talk of 'protection of aborigines,' which, as soon as it is translated into fact, becomes the most active policy for their destruction, soul and body. But the stories of the dealings of the Spaniards with the conquered Indians, which were widely known in England, seem to have affected all classes of people, not with pious passive horror, but with a genuine human indignation. A thousand anecdotes in detail we find scattered up and down the pages of Hakluyt, who, with a view to make them known, translated Peter Martyr's letters; and each commonest sailor-boy who had heard these stories from his childhood among the tales of his father's fireside, had longed to be a man, that he might go out and become the avenger of a gallant and suffering people. A high mission, undertaken with a generous heart, seldom fails to make those worthy of it to whom it is given; and it was a point of honour, if of nothing more, among the English sailors, to do no discredit by their conduct to the greatness of their cause. The high courtesy, the chivalry of the Spanish nobles, so conspicuous in their dealings with their European rivals, either failed to touch them in their dealings with uncultivated idolaters, or the high temper of the aristocracy was unable to restrain or to influence the masses of the soldiers. It would be as ungenerous as it would be untrue, to charge upon their religion the grievous actions of men who called themselves the armed missionaries of Catholicism, when the Catholic priests and bishops were the loudest in the indignation with which they denounced them. But we are obliged to charge upon it that slow and subtle influence so inevitably exercised by any religion which is divorced from life, and converted into a thing of form, or creed, or cere-

mony, or system—which could permit the same men to be extravagant in a sincere devotion to the Queen of Heaven, whose entire lower nature, unsubdued and unaffected, was given up to thirst of gold, and plunder, and sensuality. If religion does not make men more humane than they would be without it, it makes them fatally less so; and it is to be feared that the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers, which had oscillated to the other extreme, and had again crystallized into a formal antinomian fanaticism, reproduced the same fatal results as those in which the Spaniards had set them their unworthy precedent. But the Elizabethan navigators, full for the most part with large kindness, wisdom, gentleness, and beauty, bear names untainted, as far as we know, with a single crime against the savages of America; and the name of England was as famous in the Indian seas as that of Spain was infamous. On the banks of the Oronoko there was remembered for a hundred years the noble captain who had come there from the great Queen beyond the seas; and Raleigh speaks the language of the heart of his country, when he urges the English statesmen to colonize Guiana, and exults in the glorious hope of driving the white marauder into the Pacific, and restoring the Incas to the throne of Peru.

Who will not be persuaded (he says) that now at length the great Judge of the world hath heard the sighs, groans, and lamentations, bath seen the tears and blood of so many millions of innocent men, women, and children, afflicted, robbed, reviled, branded with hot irons, roasted, dismembered, mangled, stabbed, whipped, racked, scalded with hot oil, put to the strapado, ripped alive, beheaded in sport, drowned, dashed against the rocks, famished, devoured by mastiffs, burned, and by infinite cruelties consumed, and purposeth to scourge and plague that cursed nation, and to take the yoke of servitude from that distressed people, as free by nature as any Christian?

Poor Raleigh! if peace and comfort in this world

were of much importance to him, it was in an ill day that he provoked the revenge of Spain. The strength of England was needed at the moment at its own door ; the Armada came, and there was no means of executing such an enterprise. And afterwards the throne of Elizabeth was filled by a Stuart, and Guiana was to be no scene of glory for Raleigh ; rather, as later historians are pleased to think, it was the grave of his reputation.

But the hope burned clear in him through all the weary years of unjust imprisonment ; and when he was a grey-headed old man, the base son of a bad mother used it to betray him. The success of his last enterprise was made the condition under which he was to be pardoned for a crime which he had not committed ; and its success depended, as he knew, on its being kept secret from the Spaniards. James required of Raleigh on his allegiance a detail of what he proposed, giving him at the same time his word as a king that the secret should be safe with him. The next day it was sweeping out of the port of London in the swiftest of the Spanish ships, with private orders to the Governor of St Thomas to provoke a collision when Raleigh should arrive there, which should afterwards cost him his heart's blood.

We modern readers may run rapidly over the series of epithets under which Raleigh has catalogued the Indian sufferings, hoping that they are exaggerated, seeing that they are horrible, and closing our eyes against them with swiftest haste ; but it was not so when every epithet suggested a hundred familiar facts ; and some of these (not resting on English prejudice, but on sad Spanish evidence, which is too full of shame and sorrow to be suspected) shall be given in this place, however old a story it may be thought ; because, as we said above, it is impossible to understand the actions of

these men, unless we are familiar with the feelings of which their hearts were full.

The massacres under Cortez and Pizarro, terrible as they were, were not the occasion which stirred the deepest indignation. They had the excuse of what might be called, for want of a better word, necessity, and of the desperate position of small bands of men in the midst of enemies who might be counted by millions. And in De Soto, when he burnt his guides in Florida (it was his practice, when there was danger of treachery, that those who were left alive might take warning) ; or in Vasco Nunnez, praying to the Virgin on the mountains of Darien, and going down from off them into the valleys to hunt the Indian caciques, and fling them alive to his bloodhounds ; there was, at least, with all this fierceness and cruelty, a desperate courage which we cannot refuse to admire, and which mingles with and corrects our horror. It is the refinement of the Spaniard's cruelty in the settled and conquered provinces, excused by no danger and provoked by no resistance, the details of which witness to the infernal coolness with which it was perpetrated ; and the great bearing of the Indians themselves under an oppression which they despaired of resisting, raises the whole history to the rank of a world-wide tragedy, in which the nobler but weaker nature was crushed under a malignant force which was stronger and yet meaner than itself. Gold hunting and lust were the two passions for which the Spaniards cared ; and the fate of the Indian women was only more dreadful than that of the men, who were ganged and chained to a labour in the mines which was only to cease with their lives, in a land where but a little before they had lived a free contented people, more innocent of crime than perhaps any people upon earth. If we can conceive what our

own feelings would be—if, in the 'development of the mammalia,' some baser but more powerful race than man were to appear upon this planet, and we and our wives and children at our own happy firesides were degraded from our freedom, and became to them what the lower animals are to us, we can perhaps realize the feelings of the enslaved nations of Hispaniola.

As a harsh justification of slavery, it is sometimes urged that men who do not deserve to be slaves will prefer death to the endurance of it; and that if they prize their liberty, it is always in their power to assert it in the old Roman fashion. Tried even by so hard a rule, the Indians vindicated their right; and, before the close of the sixteenth century, the entire group of the Western Islands in the hands of the Spaniards, containing, when Columbus discovered them, many millions of inhabitants, were left literally desolate from suicide. Of the anecdotes of this terrible self-immolation, as they were then known in England, here are a few out of many.

The first is simple, and a specimen of the ordinary method. A Yucatan cacique, who was forced with his old subjects to labour in the mines, at last 'calling those miners into an house, to the number of ninety-five, he thus debateth with them:—

' My worthy companions and friends, why desire we to live any longer under so cruel a servitude? Let us now go unto the perpetual seat of our ancestors, for we shall there have rest from these intolerable cares and grievances which we endure under the subjection of the unthankful. Go ye before, I will presently follow you.' Having so spoken, he held out whole handfuls of those leaves which take away life, prepared for the purpose, and giving every one part thereof, being kindled to suck up the fume; who obeyed his command, the king and his chief kinsmen reserving the last place for themselves.

We speak of the crime of suicide, but few persons will see a crime in this sad and stately leave-taking of

a life which it was no longer possible to bear with unbroken hearts. We do not envy the Indian who, with Spaniards before him as an evidence of the fruits which their creed brought forth, deliberately exchanged for it the old religion of his country, which could sustain him in an action of such melancholy grandeur. But the Indians did not always reply to their oppressors with escaping passively beyond their hands. Here is a story with matter in it for as rich a tragedy as *Œdipus* or *Agamemnon*; and in its stern and tremendous features, more nearly resembling them than any which were conceived even by Shakespeare.

An officer named Orlando had taken the daughter of a Cuban cacique to be his mistress. She was with child by him, but, suspecting her of being engaged in some other intrigue, he had her fastened to two wooden spits, not intending to kill her, but to terrify her; and setting her before the fire, he ordered that she should be turned by the servants of the kitchen.

The maiden, stricken with fear through the cruelty thereof, and strange kind of torment, presently gave up the ghost. The cacique, her father, understanding the matter, took thirty of his men and went to the house of the captain, who was then absent, and slew his wife, whom he had married after that wicked act committed, and the women who were companions of the wife, and her servants every one. Then shutting the door of the house, and putting fire under it, he burnt himself and all his companions that assisted him, together with the captain's dead family and goods.

This is no fiction or poet's romance. It is a tale of wrath and revenge, which in sober dreadful truth enacted itself upon this earth, and remains among the eternal records of the doings of mankind upon it. As some relief to its most terrible features, we follow it with a story which has a touch in it of diabolical humour.

The slave-owners finding their slaves escaping thus unprosperously out of their grasp, set themselves to find a remedy for so desperate a disease, and were swift to

avail themselves of any weakness, mental or bodily, through which to retain them in life. One of these proprietors being informed that a number of his people intended to kill themselves on a certain day, at a particular spot, and knowing by experience that they were too likely to do it, presented himself there at the time which had been fixed upon, and telling the Indians when they arrived that he knew their intention, and that it was vain for them to attempt to keep anything a secret from him, he ended with saying, that he had come there to kill himself with them ; that as he had used them ill in this world, he might use them worse in the next ; 'with which he did dissuade them presently from their purpose.' With what efficacy such believers in the immortality of the soul were likely to recommend either their faith or their God ; rather, how terribly all the devotion and all the earnestness with which the poor priests who followed in the wake of the conquerors laboured to recommend it were shamed and paralyzed, they themselves too bitterly lament.

It was idle to send out governor after governor with orders to stay such practices. They had but to arrive on the scene to become infected with the same fever ; or if any remnant of Castilian honour, or any faintest echoes of the faith which they professed, still flickered in a few of the best and noblest, they could but look on with folded hands in ineffectual mourning ; they could do nothing without soldiers, and the soldiers were the worst offenders. Hispaniola became a desert ; the gold was in the mines, and there were no slaves left remaining to extract it. One means which the Spaniards dared to employ to supply the vacancy, brought about an incident which in its piteous pathos exceeds any story we have ever heard. Crimes and criminals are swept away by time, nature finds an antidote for their poison, and

they and their ill consequences alike are blotted out and perish. If we do not forgive the villain at least we cease to hate him, as it grows more clear to us that he injures none so deeply as himself. But the *Θηρεύθης κακία*, the enormous wickedness by which humanity itself has been outraged and disgraced, we cannot forgive; we cannot cease to hate that; the years roll away, but the tints of it remain on the pages of history, deep and horrible as the day on which they were entered there.

When the Spaniards understood the simple opinion of the Yucatan islanders concerning the souls of their departed, which, after their sins purged in the cold northern mountains should pass into the south, to the intent that, leaving their own country of their own accord, they might suffer themselves to be brought to Hispaniola, they did persuade those poor wretches, that they came from those places where they should see their parents and children, and all their kindred and friends that were dead, and should enjoy all kinds of delights with the embracements and fruition of all beloved beings. And they, being infected and possessed with these crafty and subtle imaginations, singing and rejoicing left their country, and followed vain and idle hope. But when they saw that they were deceived, and neither met their parents nor any that they desired, but were compelled to undergo grievous sovereignty and command, and to endure cruel and extreme labour, they either slew themselves, or, choosing to famish, gave up their fair spirits, being persuaded by no reason or violence to take food. So these miserable Yucatans came to their end.

It was once more as it was in the days of the Apostles. The New World was first offered to the holders of the old traditions. They were the husbandmen first chosen for the new vineyard, and blood and desolation were the only fruits which they reared upon it. In their hands it was becoming a kingdom, not of God, but of the devil, and a sentence of blight went out against them and against their works. How fatally it has worked, let modern Spain and Spanish America bear witness. We need not follow further the history of their dealings with the Indians. For their colonies, a fatality appears to have followed all attempts at

Catholic colonization. Like shoots from an old decaying tree which no skill and no care can rear, they were planted, and for a while they might seem to grow ; but their life was never more than a lingering death, a failure, which to a thinking person would outweigh in the arguments against Catholicism whole libraries of faultless *catenas*, and a *consensus patrum* unbroken through fifteen centuries for the supremacy of St Peter.

There is no occasion to look for superstitious causes to explain the phenomenon. The Catholic faith had ceased to be the faith of the large mass of earnest thinking capable persons ; and to those who can best do the work, all work in this world sooner or later is committed. America was the natural home for Protestants ; persecuted at home, they sought a place where they might worship God in their own way, without danger of stake or gibbet, and the French Huguenots, as afterwards the English Puritans, early found their way there. The fate of a party of Coligny's people, who had gone out as settlers, shall be the last of these stories, illustrating, as it does in the highest degree, the wrath and fury with which the passions on both sides were boiling. A certain John Ribault, with about 400 companions, had emigrated to Florida. They were quiet inoffensive people, and lived in peace there several years, cultivating the soil, building villages, and on the best possible terms with the natives. Spain was at the time at peace with France ; we are, therefore, to suppose that it was in pursuance of the great crusade, in which they might feel secure of the secret, if not the confessed, sympathy of the Guises, that a powerful Spanish fleet bore down upon this settlement. The French made no resistance, and they were seized and flayed alive, and their bodies hung out upon the trees, with an inscription suspended over them, ' Not

as Frenchmen, but as heretics.' At Paris all was sweetness and silence. The settlement was tranquilly surrendered to the same men who had made it the scene of their atrocity; and two years later, 500 of the very Spaniards who had been most active in the murder were living there in peaceable possession, in two forts which their relation with the natives had obliged them to build. It was well that there were other Frenchmen living, of whose consciences the Court had not the keeping, and who were able on emergencies to do what was right without consulting it. A certain privateer, named Dominique de Gourges, secretly armed and equipped a vessel at Rochelle, and stealing across the Atlantic and in two days collecting a strong party of Indians, he came down suddenly upon the forts, and, taking them by storm, slew or afterwards hanged every man he found there, leaving their bodies on the trees on which they had hanged the Huguenots, with their own inscription reversed against them,—'Not as Spaniards, but as murderers.' For which exploit, well deserving of all honest men's praise, Dominique de Gourges had to fly his country for his life; and, coming to England, was received with honourable welcome by Elizabeth.

It was at such a time, and to take their part amidst such scenes as these, that the English navigators appeared along the shores of South America, as the armed soldiers of the Reformation, and as the avengers of humanity. As their enterprise was grand and lofty, so for the most part was the manner in which they bore themselves worthy of it. They were no nation of saints, in the modern sentimental sense of that word; they were prompt, stern men—more ready ever to strike an enemy than to parley with him; and, private adventurers as they all were, it was natural enough

that private rapacity and private badness should be found among them as among other mortals. Every Englishman who had the means was at liberty to fit out a ship or ships, and if he could produce tolerable vouchers for himself, received at once a commission from the Court. The battles of England were fought by her children, at their own risk and cost, and they were at liberty to repay themselves the expense of their expeditions by plundering at the cost of the national enemy. Thus, of course, in a mixed world, there were found mixed marauding crews of scoundrels, who played the game which a century later was played with such effect by the pirates of the Tortugas. Negro hunters too, there were, and a bad black slave trade—in which Elizabeth herself, being hard driven for money, did not disdain to invest her capital—but on the whole, and in the war with the Spaniards, as in the war with the elements, the conduct and character of the English sailors, considering what they were and the work which they were sent to do, present us all through that age with such a picture of gallantry, disinterestedness, and high heroic energy, as has never been overmatched; the more remarkable, as it was the fruit of no drill or discipline, no tradition, no system, no organized training, but was the free native growth of a noble virgin soil.

Before starting on an expedition it was usual for the crew and the officers to meet and arrange among themselves a series of articles of conduct, to which they bound themselves by a formal agreement, the entire body itself undertaking to see to their observance. It is quite possible that strong religious profession, and even sincere profession, might be accompanied, as it was in the Spaniards, with everything most detestable. It is not sufficient of itself to prove that their actions

would correspond with it, but it is one among a number of evidences ; and coming as most of these men come before us, with hands clear of any blood but of fair and open enemies, their articles may pass at least as indications of what they were.

Here we have a few instances :—

Richard Hawkins's ship's company was, as he himself informs us, an unusually loose one. Nevertheless, we find them 'gathered together every morning and evening to serve God ;' and a fire on board, which only Hawkins's presence of mind prevented from destroying ship and crew together, was made use of by the men as an occasion to banish swearing out of the ship.

With a general consent of all our company, it was ordained that there should be a palmer or ferula which should be in the keeping of him who was taken with an oath ; and that he who had the palmer should give to every one that he took swearing, a palmada with it and the ferula ; and whosoever at the time of evening or morning prayer was found to have the palmer, should have three blows given him by the captain or the master ; and that he should still be bound to free himself by taking another, or else to run in danger of continuing the penalty, which being executed a few days, reformed the vice, so that in three days together was not one oath heard to be sworn.

The regulations for Luke Fox's voyage commenced thus :—

For as much as the good success and prosperity of every action doth consist in the due service and glorifying of God, knowing that not only our being and preservation, but the prosperity of all our actions and enterprises, do immediately depend on His Almighty goodness and mercy ; it is provided—

First, that all the company, as well officers as others, shall duly repair every day twice at the call of the bell to hear public prayers to be read, such as are authorized by the Church, and that in a godly and devout manner, as good Christians ought.

Secondly, that no man shall swear by the name of God, or use any profane oath, or blaspheme His holy name.

To symptoms such as these, we cannot but assign a very different value when they are the spontaneous growth of common minds, unstimulated by sense of

propriety or rules of the service, or other official influence lay or ecclesiastic, from what attaches to the somewhat similar ceremonials in which, among persons whose position is conspicuous, important enterprises are now and then inaugurated.

We have said as much as we intend to say of the treatment by the Spaniards of the Indian women. Sir Walter Raleigh is commonly represented by historians as rather defective, if he was remarkable at all, on the moral side of his character. Yet Raleigh can declare proudly, that all the time he was on the Oronoko, 'neither by force nor other means had any of his men intercourse with any woman there ;' and the narrator of the incidents of Raleigh's last voyage acquaints his correspondent 'with some particulars touching the government of the fleet, which, although other men in their voyages doubtless in some measure observed, yet in all the great volumes which have been written touching voyages, there is no precedent of so godly severe and martial government, which not only in itself is laudable and worthy of imitation, but is also fit to be written and engraven on every man's soul that coveteth to do honour to his country.'

Once more, the modern theory of Drake is, as we said above, that he was a gentleman-like pirate on a large scale, who is indebted for the place which he fills in history to the indistinct ideas of right and wrong prevailing in the unenlightened age in which he lived, and who therefore demands all the toleration of our own enlarged humanity to allow him to remain there. Let us see how the following incident can be made to coincide with this hypothesis :—

A few days after clearing the Channel on his first great voyage, he fell in with a small Spanish ship, which he took for a prize. He committed the care of

it to a certain Mr Doughtie, a person much trusted by, and personally very dear to him, and this second vessel was to follow him as a tender.

In dangerous expeditions into unknown seas, a second smaller ship was often indispensable to success ; but many finely intended enterprises were ruined by the cowardice of the officers to whom such ships were entrusted ; who shrank as danger thickened, and again and again took advantage of darkness or heavy weather to make sail for England and forsake their commander. Hawkins twice suffered in this way ; so did Sir Humphrey Gilbert ; and, although Drake's own kind feeling for his old friend has prevented him from leaving an exact account of his offence, we gather from the scattered hints which are let fall, that he, too, was meditating a similar piece of treason. However, it may or may not have been thus. But when at Port St Julien, 'our General,' says one of the crew,—

Began to inquire diligently of the actions of Mr Thomas Doughtie, and found them not to be such as he looked for, but tending rather to contention or mutiny, or some other disorder, whereby, without redresse, the success of the voyage might greatly have been hazarded. Whereupon the company was called together and made acquainted with the particulars of the cause, which were found, partly by Mr Doughtie's own confession, and partly by the evidence of the fact, to be true, which, when our General saw, although his private affection to Mr Doughtie (as he then, in the presence of us all, sacredly protested) was great, yet the care which he had of the state of the voyage, of the expectation of Her Majesty, and of the honour of his country, did more touch him, as indeed it ought, than the private respect of one man ; so that the cause being thoroughly heard, and all things done in good order as near as might be to the course of our law in England, it was concluded that Mr Doughtie should receive punishment according to the quality of the offence. And he, seeing no remedy but patience for himself, desired before his death to receive the communion, which he did at the hands of Mr Fletcher, our minister, and our General himself accompanied him in that holy action, which, being done, and the place of execution made ready, he, having embraced our General, and taken leave of all the company, with prayers for the Queen's Majesty and our realm, in quiet sort laid his head to the block, where he ended his life. This being done,

our General made divers speeches to the whole company, persuading us to unity, obedience, love, and regard of our voyage, and for the better confirmation thereof, willed every man the next Sunday following to prepare himself to receive the communion, as Christian brethren and friends ought to do, which was done in very reverent sort, and so with good contentment every man went about his business.

The simple majesty of this anecdote can gain nothing from any comment which we might offer upon it. The crew of a common English ship organizing, of their own free motion, on that wild shore, a judgment hall more grand and awful than any most elaborate law court, is not to be reconciled with the pirate theory. Drake, it is true, appropriated and brought home a million and a half of Spanish treasure, while England and Spain were at peace. He took that treasure because for many years the officers of the Inquisition had made free at their pleasure with the lives and goods of English merchants and seamen. The king of Spain, when appealed to, had replied that he had no power over the Holy House; and it was necessary to make the king of Spain, or the Inquisition, or whoever were the parties responsible, feel that they could not play their pious pranks with impunity. When Drake seized the bullion at Panama, he sent word to the Viceroy that he should now learn to respect the properties of English subjects; and he added, that if four English sailors, who were prisoners in Mexico, were molested, he would execute 2,000 Spaniards and send the Viceroy their heads. Spain and England were at peace, but Popery and Protestantism were at war—deep, deadly, and irreconcileable.

Wherever we find them, they are still the same. In the courts of Japan or of China; fighting Spaniards in the Pacific, or prisoners among the Algerines; founding colonies which by-and-by were to grow into enormous Transatlantic republics, or exploring in

crazy pinnacles the fierce latitudes of the Polar seas,—they are the same indomitable God-fearing men whose life was one great liturgy. ‘The ice was strong, but God was stronger,’ says one of Frobisher’s men, after grinding a night and a day among the icebergs, not waiting for God to come down and split the ice for them, but toiling through the long hours, himself and the rest fending off the vessel with poles and planks, with death glaring at them out of the rocks. Icebergs were strong, Spaniards were strong, and storms, and corsairs, and rocks and reefs, which no chart had then noted—they were all strong; but God was stronger, and that was all which they cared to know.

Out of the vast number of illustrations it is difficult to make wise selections, but the attention floats loosely over generalities, and only individual instances can seize it and hold it fast. We shall attempt to bring our readers face to face with some of these men; not, of course, to write their biographies, but to sketch the details of a few scenes, in the hope that they may tempt those under whose eyes they may fall to look for themselves to complete the perfect figure.

Some two miles above the port of Dartmouth, once among the most important harbours in England, on a projecting angle of land which runs out into the river at the head of one of its most beautiful reaches, there has stood for some centuries the Manor House of Greenaway. The water runs deep all the way to it from the sea, and the largest vessels may ride with safety within a stone’s throw of the windows. In the latter half of the sixteenth century there must have met, in the hall of this mansion, a party as remarkable as could have been found anywhere in England. Humfrey and Adrian Gilbert, with their half-brother, Walter Raleigh, here, when little boys, played at

sailors in the reaches of Long Stream ; in the summer evenings doubtless rowing down with the tide to the port, and wondering at the quaint figure-heads and carved prows of the ships which thronged it ; or climbing on board, and listening, with hearts beating, to the mariners' tales of the new earth beyond the sunset. And here in later life, matured men, whose boyish dreams had become heroic action, they used again to meet in the intervals of quiet, and the rock is shown underneath the house where Raleigh smoked the first tobacco. Another remarkable man, of whom we shall presently speak more closely, could not fail to have made a fourth at these meetings. A sailor boy of Sandwich, the adjoining parish, John Davis, showed early a genius which could not have escaped the eye of such neighbours, and in the atmosphere of Greenaway he learned to be as noble as the Gilberts, and as tender and delicate as Raleigh. Of this party, for the present we confine ourselves to the host and owner, Humfrey Gilbert, knighted afterwards by Elizabeth. Led by the scenes of his childhood to the sea and to sea adventures, and afterwards, as his mind unfolded, to study his profession scientifically, we find him as soon as he was old enough to think for himself, or make others listen to him, 'amending the great errors of naval sea cards, whose common fault is to make the degree of longitude in every latitude of one common bigness ;' inventing instruments for taking observations, studying the form of the earth, and convincing himself that there was a north-west passage, and studying the necessities of his country, and discovering the remedies for them in colonization and extended markets for home manufactures. Gilbert was examined before the Queen's Majesty and the Privy Council, and the record of his examination he

has himself left to us in a paper which he afterwards drew up, and strange enough reading it is. The most admirable conclusions stand side by side with the wildest conjectures.

Homer and Aristotle are pressed into service to prove that the ocean runs round the three old continents, and that America therefore is necessarily an island. The Gulf Stream, which he had carefully observed, eked out by a theory of the *primum mobile*, is made to demonstrate a channel to the north, corresponding to Magellan's Straits in the south, Gilbert believing, in common with almost every one of his day, that these straits were the only opening into the Pacific, and the land to the south was unbroken to the Pole. He prophesies a market in the East for our manufactured linen and calicoes :—

The Easterns greatly prizing the same, as appeareth in Hester, where the pomp is expressed of the great King of India, Ahasuerus, who matched the coloured clothes wherewith his houses and tents were appareled, with gold and silver, as part of his greatest treasure.

These and other such arguments were the best analysis which Sir Humfrey had to offer of the spirit which he felt to be working in him. We may think what we please of them; but we can have but one thought of the great grand words with which the memorial concludes, and they alone would explain the love which Elizabeth bore him :—

Never, therefore, mislike with me for taking in hand any laudable and honest enterprise, for if through pleasure or idleness we purchase shame, the pleasure vanisheth, but the shame abideth for ever.

Give me leave, therefore, without offence, always to live and die in this mind : that he is not worthy to live at all that, for fear or danger of death, shunneth his country's service and his own honour, seeing that death is inevitable and the fame of virtue immortal, wherefore in this behalf *mutare vel timere sperno*.

Two voyages which he undertook at his own cost,

which shattered his fortune, and failed, as they naturally might, since inefficient help or mutiny of subordinates, or other disorders, are inevitable conditions under which more or less great men must be content to see their great thoughts mutilated by the feebleness of their instruments, did not dishearten him, and in June 1583 a last fleet of five ships sailed from the port of Dartmouth, with commission from the Queen to discover and take possession from latitude 45° to 50° North—a voyage not a little noteworthy, there being planted in the course of it the first English colony west of the Atlantic. Elizabeth had a foreboding that she would never see him again. She sent him a jewel as a last token of her favour, and she desired Raleigh to have his picture taken before he went.

The history of the voyage was written by a Mr Edward Hayes, of Dartmouth, one of the principal actors in it, and as a composition it is more remarkable for fine writing than any very commendable thought in the author. But Sir Humfrey's nature shines through the infirmity of his chronicler; and in the end, indeed, Mr Hayes himself is subdued into a better mind. He had lost money by the voyage, and we will hope his higher nature was only under a temporary eclipse. The fleet consisted (it is well to observe the ships and the size of them) of the 'Delight,' 120 tons; the barque 'Raleigh,' 200 tons (this ship deserted off the Land's End); the 'Golden Hinde' and the 'Swallow,' 40 tons each; and the 'Squirrel,' which was called the frigate, 10 tons. For the uninitiated in such matters, we may add, that if in a vessel the size of the last, a member of the Yacht Club would consider that he had earned a club-room immortality if he had ventured a run in the depth of summer from Cowes to the Channel Islands.

We were in all (says Mr Hayes) 260 men, among whom we had of every faculty good choice. Besides, for solace of our own people, and allurement of the savages, we were provided of music in good variety, not omitting the least toys, as morris dancers, hobby horses, and May-like conceits to delight the savage people.

The expedition reached Newfoundland without accident. St John's was taken possession of, and a colony left there; and Sir Humfrey then set out exploring along the American coast to the south, he himself doing all the work in his little 10-ton cutter, the service being too dangerous for the larger vessels to venture on. One of these had remained at St John's. He was now accompanied only by the 'Delight' and the 'Golden Hinde,' and these two keeping as near the shore as they dared, he spent what remained of the summer examining every creek and bay, marking the soundings, taking the bearings of the possible harbours, and risking his life, as every hour he was obliged to risk it in such a service, in thus leading, as it were, the forlorn hope in the conquest of the New World. How dangerous it was we shall presently see. It was towards the end of August.

The evening was fair and pleasant, yet not without token of storm to ensue, and most part of this Wednesday night, like the swan that singeth before her death, they in the 'Delight' continued in sounding of drums and trumpets and fises, also winding the cornets and hautboys, and in the end of their jollity left with the battell and ringing of doleful knells.

Two days after came the storm; the 'Delight' struck upon a bank, and went down in sight of the other vessels, which were unable to render her any help. Sir Humfrey's papers, among other things, were all lost in her; at the time considered by him an irreparable misfortune. But it was little matter, he was never to need them. The 'Golden Hinde' and the 'Squirrel' were now left alone of the five

ships. The provisions were running short, and the summer season was closing. Both crews were on short allowance; and with much difficulty Sir Humfrey was prevailed upon to be satisfied for the present with what he had done, and to lay off for England.

So upon Saturday, in the afternoon, the 31st of August, we changed our course, and returned back for England, at which very instant, even in winding about, there passed along between us and the land, which we now forsook, a very lion, to our seeming, in shape, hair, and colour; not swimming after the manner of a beast by moving of his feet, but rather sliding upon the water with his whole body, except his legs, in sight, neither yet diving under and again rising as the manner is of whales, porpoises, and other fish, but confidently showing himself without hiding, notwithstanding that we presented ourselves in open view and gesture to amaze him. Thus he passed along, turning his head to and fro, yawning and gaping wide, with ugly demonstration of long teeth and glaring eyes; and to bidde us farewell, coming right against the 'Hinde,' he sent forth a horrible voice, roaring and bellowing as doth a lion, which spectacle we all beheld so far as we were able to discern the same, as men prone to wonder at every strange thing. What opinion others had thereof, and chiefly the General himself, I forbear to deliver. But he took it for *Bonum Omen*, rejoicing that he was to war against such an enemy, if it were the devil.

We have no doubt that he did think it was the devil; men in those days believing really that evil was more than a principle or a necessary accident, and that in all their labour for God and for right, they must make their account to have to fight with the devil in his proper person. But if we are to call it superstition, and if this were no devil in the form of a roaring lion, but a mere great seal or sea-lion, it is a more innocent superstition to impersonate so real a power, and it requires a bolder heart to rise up against it and defy it in its living terror, than to sublimate it away into a philosophical principle, and to forget to battle with it in speculating on its origin and nature. But to follow the brave Sir Humfrey, whose work of fighting with the devil was now over, and who was

passing to his reward. The 2nd of September the General came on board the 'Golden Hinde' 'to make merry with us.' He greatly deplored the loss of his books and papers, but he was full of confidence from what he had seen, and talked with eagerness and warmth of the new expedition for the following spring. Apocryphal gold-mines still occupying the minds of Mr Hayes and others, they were persuaded that Sir Humfrey was keeping to himself some such discovery which he had secretly made, and they tried hard to extract it from him. They could make nothing, however, of his odd, ironical answers, and their sorrow at the catastrophe which followed is sadly blended with disappointment that such a secret should have perished. Sir Humfrey doubtless saw America with other eyes than theirs, and gold-mines richer than California in its huge rivers and savannahs.

Leaving the issue of this good hope (about the gold), (continues Mr Hayes), to God, who only knoweth the truth thereof, I will hasten to the end of this tragedy, which must be knit up in the person of our General, and as it was God's ordinance upon him, even so the vehement persuasion of his friends could nothing avail to divert him from his wilful resolution of going in his frigate; and when he was entreated by the captain, master, and others, his well-wishers in the 'Hinde,' not to venture, this was his answer—'I will not forsake my little company going homewards, with whom I have passed so many storms and perils.'

Two-thirds of the way home they met foul weather and terrible seas, 'breaking short and pyramid-wise.' Men who had all their lives 'occupied the sea' had never seen it more outrageous. 'We had also upon our mainyard an apparition of a little fier by night, which seamen do call Castor and Pollux.'

Monday the ninth of September, in the afternoon, the frigate was near cast away oppressed by waves, but at that time recovered, and giving forth signs of joy, the General, sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried unto us in the 'Hinde' so often as we did approach

within hearing, 'We are as near to heaven by sea as by land,' reiterating the same speech, well befitting a soldier resolute in Jesus Christ, and I can testify that he was. The same Monday night, about twelve of the clock, or not long after, the frigate being ahead of us in the 'Golden Hinde,' suddenly her lights were out, whereof as it were in a moment we lost the sight; and withal our watch cried, 'The General was cast away,' which was too true.

Thus faithfully (concludes Mr Hayes, in some degree rising above himself) I have related this story, wherein some spark of the knight's virtues, though he be extinguished, may happily appear; he remaining resolute to a purpose honest and godly as was this, to discover, possess, and reduce unto the service of God and Christian piety, those remote and heathen countries of America. Such is the infinite bounty of God, who from every evil deriveth good, that fruit may grow in time of our travelling in these North-Western lands (as has it not grown?), and the crosses, turmoils, and afflictions, both in the preparation and execution of the voyage, did correct the intemperate humours which before we noted to be in this gentleman, and made unsavoury and less delightful his other manifold virtues.

Thus as he was refined and made nearer unto the image of God, so it pleased the Divine will to resume him unto Himself, whither both his and every other high and noble mind have always aspired.

Such was Sir Humfrey Gilbert; still in the prime of his years when the Atlantic swallowed him. Like the gleam of a landscape lit suddenly for a moment by the lightning, these few scenes flash down to us across the centuries: but what a life must that have been of which this was the conclusion! We have glimpses of him a few years earlier, when he won his spurs in Ireland—won them by deeds which to us seem terrible in their ruthlessness, but which won the applause of Sir Henry Sidney as too high for praise or even reward. Chequered like all of us with lines of light and darkness, he was, nevertheless, one of a race which has ceased to be. We look round for them, and we can hardly believe that the same blood is flowing in our veins. Brave we may still be, and strong perhaps as they, but the high moral grace which made bravery and strength so beautiful is departed from us for ever.

Our space is sadly limited for historical portrait

painting ; but we must find room for another of that Greenaway party whose nature was as fine as that of Gilbert, and who intellectually was more largely gifted. The latter was drowned in 1583. In 1585 John Davis left Dartmouth on his first voyage into the Polar seas ; and twice subsequently he went again, venturing in small ill-equipped vessels of thirty or forty tons into the most dangerous seas. These voyages were as remarkable for their success as for the daring with which they were accomplished, and Davis's epitaph is written on the map of the world, where his name still remains to commemorate his discoveries. Brave as he was, he is distinguished by a peculiar and exquisite sweetness of nature, which, from many little facts of his life, seems to have affected every one with whom he came in contact in a remarkable degree. We find men, for the love of Master Davis, leaving their fire-sides to sail with him, without other hope or motion ; we find silver bullets cast to shoot him in a mutiny ; the hard rude natures of the mutineers being awed by something in his carriage which was not like that of a common man. He has written the account of one of his northern voyages himself ; one of those, by-the-by, which the Hakluyt Society have mutilated ; and there is an imaginative beauty in it, and a rich delicacy of expression, which is called out in him by the first sight of strange lands and things and people.

To show what he was, we should have preferred, if possible, to have taken the story of his expedition into the South Seas, in which, under circumstances of singular difficulty, he was deserted by Candish, under whom he had sailed ; and after inconceivable trials from famine, mutiny, and storm, ultimately saved himself and his ship, and such of the crew as had chosen to submit to his orders. But it is a long history, and

will not admit of being curtailed. As an instance of the stuff of which it was composed, he ran back in the black night in a gale of wind through the Straits of Magellan, *by a chart which he had made with the eye in passing up*. His anchors were lost and broken ; the cables were parted. He could not bring up the ship ; there was nothing for it but to run, and he carried her safe through along a channel often not three miles broad, sixty miles from end to end, and twisting like the reaches of a river.

For the present, however, we are forced to content ourselves with a few sketches out of the north-west voyages. Here is one, for instance, which shows how an Englishman could deal with the Indians. Davis had landed at Gilbert's Sound, and gone up the country exploring. On his return he found his crew loud in complaints of the thievish propensities of the natives, and urgent to have an example made of some of them. On the next occasion he fired a gun at them with blank cartridge ; but their nature was still too strong for them.

Seeing iron (he says), they could in no case forbear stealing ; which, when I perceived, it did but minister to me occasion of laughter to see their simplicity, and I willed that they should not be hardly used, but that our company should be more diligent to keep their things, supposing it to be very hard in so short a time to make them know their evils.

In his own way, however, he took an opportunity of administering a lesson to them of a more wholesome kind than could be given with gunpowder and bullets. Like the rest of his countrymen, he believed the savage Indians in their idolatries to be worshippers of the devil. 'They are witches,' he says ; 'they have images in great store, and use many kinds of enchantments.' And these enchantments they tried on one occasion to put in force against himself and crew.

Being on shore on the 4th day of July, one of them made a long oration, and then kindled a fire, into which with many strange words and gestures he put divers things, which we supposed to be a sacrifice. Myself and certain of my company standing by, they desired us to go into the smoke. I desired them to go into the smoke, which they would by no means do. I then took one of them and thrust him into the smoke, and willed one of my company to tread out the fire, and spurn it into the sea, which was done to show them that we did condemn their sorceries.

It is a very English story—exactly what a modern Englishman would do; only, perhaps, not believing that there was any real devil in the case, which makes a difference. However, real or not real, after seeing him patiently put up with such an injury, we will hope the poor Greenlander had less respect for the devil than formerly.

Leaving Gilbert's Sound, Davis went on to the north-west, and in lat. 63° fell in with a barrier of ice, which he coasted for thirteen days without finding an opening. The very sight of an iceberg was new to all his crew; and the ropes and shrouds, though it was midsummer, becoming compassed with ice,—

The people began to fall sick and faint-hearted—whereupon, very orderly, with good discretion, they entreated me to regard the safety of mine own life, as well as the preservation of theirs; and that I should not, through overboldness, leave their widows and fatherless children to give me bitter curses.

Whereupon, seeking counsel of God, it pleased His Divine Majesty to move my heart to prosecute that which I hope shall be to His glory, and to the contentation of every Christian mind.

He had two vessels—one of some burthen, the other a pinnace of thirty tons. The result of the counsel which he had sought was, that he made over his own large vessel to such as wished to return, and himself, 'thinking it better to die with honour than to return with infamy,' went on, with such volunteers as would follow him, in a poor leaky cutter, up the sea now in commemoration of that adventure called Davis's

Straits. He ascended 4° North of the furthest known point, among storms and icebergs, when the long days and twilight nights alone saved him from being destroyed, and, coasting back along the American shore, he discovered Hudson's Straits, supposed then to be the long-desired entrance into the Pacific. This exploit drew the attention of Walsingham, and by him Davis was presented to Burleigh, 'who was also pleased to show him great encouragement.' If either these statesmen or Elizabeth had been twenty years younger, his name would have filled a larger space in history than a small corner of the map of the world ; but if he was employed at all in the last years of the century, no *vates sacer* has been found to celebrate his work, and no clue is left to guide us. He disappears ; a cloud falls over him. He is known to have commanded trading vessels in the Eastern seas, and to have returned five times from India. But the details are all lost, and accident has only parted the clouds for a moment to show us the mournful setting with which he, too, went down upon the sea.

In taking out Sir Edward Michellthorne to India, in 1604, he fell in with a crew of Japanese, whose ship had been burnt, drifting at sea, without provisions, in a leaky junk. He supposed them to be pirates, but he did not choose to leave them to so wretched a death, and took them on board ; and in a few hours, watching their opportunity, they murdered him.

As the fool dieth, so dieth the wise, and there is no difference ; it was the chance of the sea, and the ill reward of a humane action—a melancholy end for such a man—like the end of a warrior, not dying Epaminondas-like on the field of victory, but cut off in some poor brawl or ambuscade. But so it was with all these men. They were cut off in the flower of their days, and few

of them laid their bones in the sepulchres of their fathers. They knew the service which they had chosen, and they did not ask the wages for which they had not laboured. Life with them was no summer holiday, but a holy sacrifice offered up to duty, and what their Master sent was welcome. Beautiful is old age—beautiful as the slow-dropping mellow autumn of a rich glorious summer. In the old man, nature has fulfilled her work ; she loads him with her blessings ; she fills him with the fruits of a well-spent life ; and, surrounded by his children and his children's children, she rocks him softly away to a grave, to which he is followed with blessings. God forbid we should not call it beautiful. It is beautiful, but not the most beautiful. There is another life, hard, rough, and thorny, trodden with bleeding feet and aching brow ; the life of which the cross is the symbol ; a battle which no peace follows, this side the grave ; which the grave gapes to finish, before the victory is won ; and—strange that it should be so—this is the highest life of man. Look back along the great names of history ; there is none whose life has been other than this. They to whom it has been given to do the really highest work in this earth—whatever they are, Jew or Gentile, Pagan or Christian, warriors, legislators, philosophers, priests, poets, kings, slaves—one and all, their fate has been the same—the same bitter cup has been given to them to drink. And so it was with the servants of England in the sixteenth century. Their life was a long battle, either with the elements or with men ; and it was enough for them to fulfil their work, and to pass away in the hour when God had nothing more to bid them do. They did not complain, and why should we complain for them ? Peaceful life was not what they desired, and an honourable death had no terrors for them. Theirs was the old

Grecian spirit, and the great heart of the Theban poet lived again in them :

Θανεῖν δ' οἵσιν ἀνδύκα, τί κέ τις ἀνώνυμον
γῆρας ἐν σκύτῳ καθημένος ἔψοι μάταν,
ἀπάντων καλῶν ζυμόρος;

‘Seeing,’ in Gilbert’s own brave words, ‘that death is inevitable, and the fame of virtue is immortal ; wherefore in this behalf *mutare vel timere sperno.*’

In the conclusion of these light sketches we pass into an element different from that in which we have been lately dwelling. The scenes in which Gilbert and Davis played out their high natures were of the kind which we call peaceful, and the enemies with which they contended were principally the ice and the wind, and the stormy seas and the dangers of unknown and savage lands. We shall close amidst the roar of cannon and the wrath and rage of battle. Hume, who alludes to the engagement which we are going to describe, speaks of it in a tone which shows that he looked at it as something portentous and prodigious ; as a thing to wonder at—but scarcely as deserving the admiration which we pay to actions properly within the scope of humanity—and as if the energy which was displayed in it was like the unnatural strength of madness. He does not say this, but he appears to feel it ; and he scarcely would have felt it if he had cared more deeply to saturate himself with the temper of the age of which he was writing. At the time, all England and all the world rang with the story. It struck a deeper terror, though it was but the action of a single ship, into the hearts of the Spanish people ; it dealt a more deadly blow upon their fame and moral strength than the destruction of the Armada itself ; and in the direct results which arose from it, it was scarcely less disastrous to them. Hardly, as it seems

to us, if the most glorious actions which are set like jewels in the history of mankind are weighed one against the other in the balance, hardly will those 300 Spartans who in the summer morning sat 'combing their long hair for death' in the passes of Thermopylæ, have earned a more lofty estimate for themselves than this one crew of modern Englishmen.

In August 1591, Lord Thomas Howard with six English line-of-battle ships, six victuallers, and two or three pinnaces, was lying at anchor under the Island of Florez. Light in ballast and short of water, with half his men disabled by sickness, Howard was unable to pursue the aggressive purpose on which he had been sent out. Several of the ships' crews were on shore: the ships themselves 'all pestered and rommaging,' with everything out of order. In this condition they were surprised by a Spanish fleet consisting of 53 men-of-war. Eleven out of the twelve English ships obeyed the signal of the admiral, to cut or weigh their anchors and escape as they might. The twelfth, the 'Revenge,' was unable for the moment to follow. Of her crew of 190, ninety were sick on shore, and from the position of the ship, there was some delay and difficulty in getting them on board. The 'Revenge' was commanded by Sir Richard Grenville, of Bideford, a man well-known in the Spanish seas, and the terror of the Spanish sailors; so fierce he was said to be, that mythic stories passed from lip to lip about him, and, like Earl Talbot or Cœur de Lion, the nurses at the Azores frightened children with the sound of his name. 'He was of great revenues, of his own inheritance,' they said, 'but of unquiet mind, and greatly affected to wars,' and from his uncontrollable propensities for blood-eating, he had volunteered his services to the Queen; 'of so hard a complexion was he, that I (John

Huighen von Linschoten, who is our authority here, and who was with the Spanish fleet after the action) have been told by divers credible persons who stood and beheld him, that he would carouse three or four glasses of wine, and take the glasses between his teeth and crush them in pieces and swallow them down.' Such Grenville was to the Spaniard. To the English he was a goodly and gallant gentleman, who had never turned his back upon an enemy, and was remarkable in that remarkable time for his constancy and daring. In this surprise at Florez he was in no haste to fly. He first saw all his sick on board and stowed away on the ballast ; and then, with no more than 100 men left him to fight and work the ship, he deliberately weighed, uncertain, as it seemed at first, what he intended to do. The Spanish fleet were by this time on his weather bow, and he was persuaded (we here take his cousin Raleigh's beautiful narrative, and follow it in Raleigh's words) 'to cut his mainsail and cast about, and trust to the sailing of the ship :'—

But Sir Richard utterly refused to turn from the enemy, alledging that he would rather choose to die than to dishonour himself, his country, and her Majesty's ship, persuading his company that he would pass through their two squadrons in spite of them, and enforce those of Seville to give him way : which he performed upon diverse of the foremost, who, as the mariners term it, sprang their luff, and fell under the lee of the 'Revenge.' But the other course had been the better ; and might right well have been answered in so great an impossibility of prevailing : notwithstanding, out of the greatness of his mind, he could not be persuaded.

The wind was light ; the 'San Philip,' 'a huge high-carged ship' of 1500 tons, came up to windward of him, and, taking the wind out of his sails, ran aboard him.

After the 'Revenge' was entangled with the 'San Philip,' four others boarded her, two on her larboard and two on her starboard. The fight thus beginning at three o'clock in the afternoon continued very terrible all that evening. But the great 'San Philip,' having received the lower tier of the 'Revenge,' shifted herself with all

diligence from her sides, utterly misliking her first entertainment. The Spanish ships were filled with soldiers, in some 200, besides the mariners, in some 500, in others 800. In ours there were none at all, besides the mariners, but the servants of the commander and some few voluntary gentlemen only. After many interchanged volleys of great ordnance and small shot, the Spaniards deliberated to enter the 'Revenge,' and made divers attempts, hoping to force her by the multitude of their armed soldiers and musketeers ; but were still repulsed again and again, and at all times beaten back into their own ship or into the sea. In the beginning of the fight the 'George Noble' of London, having received some shot through her by the Armadas, fell under the lee of the 'Revenge,' and asked Sir Richard what he would command him ; but being one of the victuallers, and of small force, Sir Richard bade him save himself and leave him to his fortune.

This last was a little touch of gallantry, which we should be glad to remember with the honour due to the brave English sailor who commanded the 'George Noble,' but his name has passed away, and his action is an *in memoriam*, on which time has effaced the writing. All that August night the fight continued, the stars rolling over in their sad majesty, but unseen through the sulphurous clouds which hung over the scene. Ship after ship of the Spaniards came on upon the 'Revenge,' 'so that never less than two mighty galleons were at her side and aboard her,' washing up like waves upon a rock, and falling foiled and shattered back amidst the roar of the artillery. Before morning fifteen several Armadas had assailed her, and all in vain ; some had been sunk at her side ; and the rest, 'so ill approving of their entertainment, that at break of day they were far more willing to hearken to a composition, than hastily to make more assaults or entries.' 'But as the day increased,' says Raleigh, 'so our men decreased ; and as the light grew more and more, by so much the more grew our discomfort, for none appeared in sight but enemies, save one small ship called the "Pilgrim," commanded by Jacob Whiddon, who hovered all night to see the success,

but in the morning, bearing with the “Revenge,” was hunted like a hare among many ravenous hounds—but escaped.’

All the powder in the ‘Revenge’ was now spent, all her pikes were broken, 40 out of her 100 men killed, and a great number of the rest wounded. Sir Richard, though badly hurt early in the battle, never forsook the deck till an hour before midnight; and was then shot through the body while his wounds were being dressed, and again in the head. His surgeon was killed while attending on him; the masts were lying over the side, the rigging cut or broken, the upper works all shot in pieces, and the ship herself, unable to move, was settling slowly in the sea; the vast fleet of Spaniards lying round her in a ring, like dogs round a dying lion, and wary of approaching him in his last agony. Sir Richard, seeing that it was past hope, having fought for fifteen hours, and ‘having by estimation eight hundred shot of great artillery through him,’ ‘commanded the master gunner, whom he knew to be a most resolute man, to split and sink the ship, that thereby nothing might remain of glory or victory to the Spaniards; seeing in so many hours they were not able to take her, having had above fifteen hours’ time, above ten thousand men, and fifty-three men-of-war to perform it withal; and persuaded the company, or as many as he could induce, to yield themselves unto God and to the mercy of none else; but as they had, like valiant resolute men, repulsed so many enemies, they should not now shorten the honour of their nation by prolonging their own lives for a few hours or a few days.’

The gunner and a few others consented. But such *δαιμονίη ἀρετὴ* was more than could be expected of ordinary seamen. They had dared do all which did

become men, and they were not more than men. Two Spanish ships had gone down, above 1500 of their crew were killed, and the Spanish admiral could not induce any one of the rest of his fleet to board the 'Revenge' again, 'doubting lest Sir Richard would have blown up himself and them, knowing his dangerous disposition.' Sir Richard lying disabled below, the captain, 'finding the Spaniards as ready to entertain a composition as they could be to offer it,' gained over the majority of the surviving company; and the remainder then drawing back from the master gunner, they all, without further consulting their dying commander, surrendered on honourable terms. If unequal to the English in action, the Spaniards were at least as courteous in victory. It is due to them to say, that the conditions were faithfully observed; and 'the ship being marvellous unsavourie,' Alonzo de Baçon, the Spanish admiral, sent his boat to bring Sir Richard on board his own vessel.

Sir Richard, whose life was fast ebbing away, replied that 'he might do with his body what he list, for that he esteemed it not;' and as he was carried out of the ship he swooned, and reviving again, desired the company to pray for him.

The admiral used him with all humanity, 'commending his valour and worthiness, being unto them a rare spectacle, and a resolution seldom approved.' The officers of the fleet, too, John Higgins tells us, crowded round to look at him; and a new fight had almost broken out between the Biscayans and the 'Portugals,' each claiming the honour of having boarded the 'Revenge.'

In a few hours Sir Richard, feeling his end approaching, showed not any sign of faintness, but spake these words in Spanish, and said, 'Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and quiet mind,

for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do that hath fought for his country, queen, religion, and honour. Whereby my soul most joyfully departeth out of this body, and shall always leave behind it an everlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier that hath done his duty as he was bound to do.' When he had finished these or other such like words, he gave up the ghost with great and stout courage, and no man could perceive any sign of heaviness in him.

Such was the fight at Florez, in that August of 1591, without its equal in such of the annals of mankind as the thing which we call history has preserved to us; scarcely equalled by the most glorious fate which the imagination of Barrère could invent for the 'Vengeur.' Nor did the matter end without a sequel awful as itself. Sea battles have been often followed by storms, and without a miracle; but with a miracle, as the Spaniards and the English alike believed, or without one, as we moderns would prefer believing, 'there ensued on this action a tempest so terrible as was never seen or heard the like before.' A fleet of merchantmen joined the Armada immediately after the battle, forming in all 140 sail; and of these 140, only 32 ever saw Spanish harbour. The rest foundered, or were lost on the Azores. The men-of-war had been so shattered by shot as to be unable to carry sail; and the 'Revenge' herself, disdaining to survive her commander, or as if to complete his own last baffled purpose, like Samson, buried herself and her 200 prize crew under the rocks of St Michael's.

And it may well be thought and presumed (says John Huighen) that it was no other than a just plague purposely sent upon the Spaniards; and that it might be truly said, the taking of the 'Revenge' was justly revenged on them; and not by the might or force of man, but by the power of God. As some of them openly said in the Isle of Terceira, that they believed verily God would consume them, and that he took part with the Lutherans and heretics saying further, that so soon as they had thrown the dead body of the Vice-Admiral Sir Richard Grenville overboard, they verily thought that as he had a devilish faith and religion, and there-

fore the devil loved him, so he presently sunk into the bottom of the sea and down into hell, where he raised up all the devils to the revenge of his death, and that they brought so great a storm and torments upon the Spaniards, because they only maintained the Catholic and Romish religion. Such and the like blasphemies against God they ceased not openly to utter.

HOMER.¹

TROY fell before the Greeks; and in its turn the war of Troy is now falling before the critics. That ten years' death-struggle, in which the immortals did not disdain to mingle—those massive warriors, with their grandeur and their chivalry, have, 'like an unsubstantial pageant, faded' before the wand of these modern enchanters; and the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the other early legends, are discovered to be no more than the transparent myths of an old cosmogony, the arabesques and frescoes with which the imagination of the Ionian poets set off and ornamented the palace of the heavens, the struggle of the earth with the seasons, and the labours of the sun through his twelve signs.

Nay, with Homer himself it was likely at one time to have fared no better. His works, indeed, were indestructible, yet if they could not be destroyed, they might be disorganized; and with their instinctive hatred of facts, the critics fastened on the historical existence of the poet. The origin of the poems was distributed among the clouds of pre-historic imagination; and—instead of a single inspired Homer for their author, we were required to believe in some extraordinary spontaneous generation, or in some collective genius of an age which ignorance had personified.

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*, 1851.

But the person of a poet has been found more difficult of elimination than a mere fact of history. Facts, it was once said, were stubborn things ; but in our days we have changed all that ; a fact, under the knife of a critic, splits in pieces, and is dissected out of belief with incredible readiness. The helpless thing lies under his hand like a foolish witness in a law court, when browbeaten by an unscrupulous advocate, and is turned about and twisted this way and that way, till in its distraction it contradicts itself, and bears witness against itself ; and to escape from torture, at last flies utterly away, itself half doubting its own existence.

But it requires more cunning weapons to destroy a Homer ; like his own immortals, he may be wounded, but he cannot have the life carved out of him by the prosaic strokes of common men. His poems have but to be disintegrated to unite again, so strong are they in the individuality of their genius. The singleness of their structure—the unity of design—the distinctness of drawing in the characters—the inimitable peculiarities of manner in each of them, seem to place beyond serious question, after the worst onslaught of the Wolfian critics, that both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, whether or not the work of the same mind, are at least each of them singly the work of one.

Let them leave us Homer, however, and on the rank and file of facts they may do their worst ; we can be indifferent to, or even thankful for, what slaughter they may make. In the legends of the *Theogonia*, in that of Zeus and Cronus, for instance, there is evidently a metaphysical allegory ; in the legends of Persephone, or of the *Dioscuri*, a physical one ; in that of Athene, a profoundly philosophical one ; and fused as the entire system was in the intensely poetical conception of the early thinkers, it would be impossible, even if it were

desirable, at this time of day, to disentangle the fibres of all these various elements. Fact and theory, the natural and the supernatural, the legendary and the philosophical, shade off so imperceptibly one into the other, in the stories of the Olympians, or of their first offspring, that we can never assure ourselves that we are on historic ground, or that, antecedent to the really historic age, there is any such ground to be found anywhere. The old notion, that the heroes were deified men, is no longer tenable. With but few exceptions, we can trace their names as the names of the old gods of the Hellenic or Pelasgian races ; and if they appeared later in human forms, they descended from Olympus to assume them. Diomed was the Etolian sun-god ; Achilles was worshipped in Thessaly long before he became the hero of the tale of Troy. The tragedy of the house of Atreus, and the bloody bath of Agamemnon, as we are now told with appearance of certainty,¹ are humanized stories of the physical struggle of the opposing principles of life and death, light and darkness, night and day, winter and summer.

And let them be so ; we need not be sorry to believe that there is no substantial basis for these tales of crime. The history of mankind is not so pure but that we can afford to lose a few dark pages out of the record. Let it be granted that of the times which Homer sung historically we know nothing literal at all—not any names of any kings, of any ministers, wars, intrigues, revolutions, crimes. They are all gone—dead—passed away : their vacant chronicles may be silent as the tombs in which their bones are buried. Of such stuff as that with which historians fill their pages there is no trace ; it is a blank, vacant as the annals of the Hottentot or of the Red Indian. Yet when all is said, there remain

¹ Mackay's *Progress of the Intellect*.

still to us in Homer's verse, materials richer, perhaps, than exist for any period of the ancient world, richer than even for the brilliant days of Pericles, or of the Cæsars, to construct a history of another kind—a history, a picture not of the times of which he sang, but of the men among whom he lived. How they acted; how they thought, talked, and felt; what they made of this earth, and of their place in it; their private life and their public life; men and women; masters and servants; rich and poor—we have it all delineated in the marvellous verse of a poet who, be he what he may, was in this respect the greatest which the earth has ever seen. In extent, the information is little enough; but in the same sense as it has been said that an hour at an Athenian supper-party would teach us more Grecian life and character than all Aristophanes, Homer's pictures of life and manners are so living, so distinct, so palpable, that a whole prose encyclopædia of disconnected facts could give us nothing like them. It is the marvellous property of verse—one, if we rightly consider it, which would excuse any superstition on the origin of language—that the metrical and rhythmic arrangement of syllable and sound is able to catch and express back to us, not the stories of actions, but the actions themselves, with all the feelings which inspire them; to call up human action, and all other outward things in which human hearts take interest—to produce them, or to reproduce them, with a distinctness which shall produce the same emotions which they would themselves produce when really existing. The thing itself is made present before us by an exercise of creative power as genuine as that of Nature herself; which, perhaps, is but the same power manifesting itself at one time in words, at another in outward phenomena. Whatever be the cause, the fact is so. Poetry has this

life-giving power, and prose has it not ; and thus the poet is the truest historian. Whatever is properly valuable in history the poet gives us—not events and names, but emotion, but action, but life. He is the heart of his age, and his verse expresses his age ; and what matter is it by what name he describes his places or his persons ? What matter is it what his own name was, while we have himself, and while we have the originals, from which he drew ? The work and the life are all for which we need care, are all which can really interest us ; the names are nothing. Though Phœacia was a dreamland, or a symbol of the Elysian fields, yet Homer drew his material, his island, his palaces, his harbour, his gardens of perennial beauty, from those fair cities which lay along the shores of his own Ionia ; and like his blind Demodocus, Homer doubtless himself sung those very hymns which now delight us so, in the halls of many a princely Alcinous.

The prose historian may give us facts and names ; he may catalogue the successions, and tell us long stories of battles, and of factions, and of political intrigues ; he may draw characters for us, of the sort which figure commonly in such features of human affairs, men of the unheroic, unpoetic kind—the Cleons, the Sejanuses, the Tiberiuses, a Philip the Second or a Louis Quatorze, in whom the noble element died out into selfishness and vulgarity. But great men—and all **MEN** properly so called (whatever is genuine and natural in them)—lie beyond prose, and can only be really represented by the poet. This is the reason why such men as Alexander, or as Cæsar, or as Cromwell, so perplex us in histories, because they and their actions are beyond the scope of the art through which we have looked at them. We compare the man as the historian represents him, with the track of his path through the world. The

work is the work of a giant ; the man, stripped of the vulgar appendages with which the stunted imagination of his biographer may have set him off, is full of meanesses and littlenesses, and is scarcely greater than one of ourselves. Prose, that is, has attempted something to which it is not equal. It describes a figure which it calls Cæsar ; but it is not Cæsar, it is a monster. For the same reason, prose fictions, novels, and the like, are worthless for more than a momentary purpose. The life which they are able to represent is not worth representing. There is no person so poor in his own eyes as not to gaze with pleasure into a looking-glass ; and the prose age may value its own image in the novel. But the value of all such representations is ephemeral. It is with the poet's art as with the sculptor's—sandstone will not carve like marble, its texture is too loose to retain a sharply moulded outline. The actions of men, if they are true, noble, and genuine, are strong enough to bear the form and bear the polish of verse ; if loose or feeble, they crumble away into the softer undulations of prose.

What the life was whose texture bore shaping into Homer's verse, we intend to spend these pages in examining. It is, of course, properly to be sought for in the poems themselves. But we shall here be concerned mainly with features which in the original are rather secondary than prominent, and which have to be collected out of fragments, here a line, and there a line out of little hints, let fall by Homer as it were by accident. Things too familiar to his own hearers to require dwelling on, to us, whose object is to make out just those very things which were familiar, are of special and singular value. It is not an inquiry which will much profit us, if we come to it with any grand notions of the 'progress of the species,' for in many ways it will discourage the belief in progress.

We have fallen into ways of talking of the childhood and infancy of the race, as if no beards had grown on any face before the modern Reformation ; and even people who know what old Athens was under Pericles, look commonly on earlier Greece as scarcely struggling out of its cradle. It would have fared so with all early history except for the Bible. The Old Testament has operated partially to keep us in our modest senses, and we can see something grand about the patriarchs ; but this is owing to exceptional causes, which do not apply to other literature ; and in spite of our admiration of Homer's poetry, we regard his age, and the contemporary periods in the other people of the earth, as a kind of childhood little better than barbarism. We look upon it, at all events, as too far removed in every essential of spirit or of form from our own, to enable us to feel for it any strong interest or sympathy. More or less we have, every one of us, felt something of this kind. Homer's men are, at first sight, unlike any men that we have ever seen ; and it is not without a shock of surprise that, for the first time, we fall, in reading him, across some little trait of humanity which in form as well as spirit is really identical with our own experience. Then, for the moment, all is changed with us—gleams of light flash out, in which the drapery becomes transparent, and we see the human form behind it, and that entire old world in the warm glow of flesh and blood. Such is the effect of those few child scenes of his, which throw us back into our old familiar childhood. With all these years between us, there is no difference between their children and ours, and child would meet child without sense of strangeness in common games and common pleasures.

The little Ulysses, climbing on the knees of his

father's guest, coaxing for a taste of the red wine, and spilling it as he starts at the unusual taste; or that other most beautiful picture of him running at Laertes's side in the garden at Ithaca, the father teaching the boy the names of the fruit-trees, and making presents to him of this tree and of that tree for his very own, to help him to remember what they were called; the partition wall of three thousand years melts away as we look back at scenes like these; that broad, world-experienced man was once, then, such a little creature as we remember ourselves, and Laertes a calm, kind father of the nineteenth century. Then, as now, the children loved to sport upon the shore, and watch the inrolling waves;—then, as now, the boy-architect would pile the moist sand into mimic town or castle, and when the work was finished, sweep it away again in wanton humour with foot and hand; then, as now, the little tired maiden would cling to her mother's skirt, and trotting painfully along beside her, look up wistfully and plead with moist eyes to be carried in her arms. Nay, and among the grown ones, where time has not changed the occupation, and the forms of culture have little room to vary, we meet again with very familiar faces. There is Melantho, the not over-modest tittering waiting-maid—saucy to her mistress and the old housekeeper, and always running after the handsome young princes. Unhappy Melantho, true child of universal nature! grievous work we should make with most households, if all who resemble thee were treated to as rough a destiny. And there are other old friends whom it is pleasant enough to recognize at so long a distance. 'Certain smooth-haired, sleek-faced fellows—insolent where their lords would permit them; inquisitive and pert, living but to eat and drink, and pilfering the good things, to convey

them stealthily to their friends outside the castle wall.' The thing that hath been, that shall be again. When Homer wrote, the type had settled into its long-enduring form. 'Such are they,' he adds, in his good-natured irony, 'as the valet race ever love to be.'

With such evidence of identity among us all, it is worth while to look closer at the old Greeks, to try to find in Homer something beyond fine poetry, or exciting adventures or battle-scenes, or material for scholarship; for awhile to set all that aside, and look in him for the story of real living men—set to pilgrimage in the old way on the same old earth—men such as we are, children of one family, with the same work to do, to live the best life they could, and to save their souls—with the same trials, the same passions, the same difficulties, if with weaker means of meeting them.

And first for their religion.

Let those who like it, lend their labour to the unravelling the secrets of the mythologies. Theogonies and Theologies are not religion; they are but its historic dress and outward or formal expression, which, like a language, may be intelligible to those who see the inward meaning in the sign, but no more than confused sound to us who live in another atmosphere, and have no means of transferring ourselves into the sentiment of an earlier era. It is not in these forms of a day or of an age that we should look for the real belief—the real feelings of the heart; but in the natural expressions which burst out spontaneously—expressions of opinion on Providence, on the relation of man to God, on the eternal laws by which this world is governed. Perhaps we misuse the word in speaking of religion; we ought rather to speak of piety: piety is always simple; the emotion is too vast, too overpowering,

whenever it is genuine, to be nice or fantastic in its form ; and leaving philosophies and cosmogonies to shape themselves in myth and legend, it speaks itself out with a calm and humble clearness. We may trifle with our own discoveries, and hand them over to the fancy or the imagination for elaborate decoration. We may shroud over supposed mysteries under an enigmatic veil, and adapt the degrees of initiation to the capacities of our pupils ; but before the vast facts of God and Providence, the difference between man and man dwarfs into nothing. They are no discoveries of our own with which we can meddle, but revelations of the Infinite, which, like the sunlight, shed themselves on all alike, wise and unwise, good and evil, and they claim and they permit no other acknowledgment from us than the simple obedience of our lives, and the plainest confession of our lips.

Such confessions, except in David's Psalms, we shall not anywhere find more natural or unaffected than in Homer—most definite, yet never elaborate—as far as may be from any complimenting of Providence, yet expressing the most unquestioning conviction. We shall not often remember them when we set about religion as a business ; but when the occasions of life stir the feelings in us on which religion itself reposes, if we were as familiar with the Iliad as with the Psalms, the words of the old Ionian singer would leap as naturally to our lips as those of the Israelite king.

Zeus is not always the questionable son of Cronus, nor the gods always the mythologic Olympians. Generally, it is true, they appear as a larger order of subject beings—beings like men, and subject to a higher control—in a position closely resembling that of Milton's angels, and liable like them to passion and to error. But at times, the father of gods and men is

the Infinite and Eternal Ruler—the living Providence of the world—and the lesser gods are the immortal administrators of his Divine will throughout the lower creation. For ever at the head of the universe there is an awful spiritual power; when Zeus appears with a distinct and positive personality, he is himself subordinate to an authority which elsewhere is one with himself. Wherever either he or the other gods are made susceptible of emotion, the Invisible is beyond and above them. When Zeus is the personal father of Sarpedon, and his private love conflicts with the law of the eternal order, though he has power to set aside the law, he dares not break it; but in the midst of his immortality, and on his own awful throne, he weeps tears of blood in ineffectual sorrow for his dying child. And again, there is a power supreme both over Zeus and over Poseidon, of which Iris reminds the latter, when she is sent to rebuke him for his disobedience to his brother. It is a law, she says, that the younger shall obey the elder, and the Erinnys will revenge its breach even on a god.

But descending from the more difficult Pantheon among mankind, the Divine law of justice is conceived as clearly as we in this day can conceive it. The supreme power is the same immortal lover of justice and the same hater of iniquity; and justice means what we mean by justice, and iniquity what we mean by iniquity. There is no diffidence, no scepticism on this matter; the moral law is as sure as day and night, summer and winter. Thus in the sixteenth Iliad—

‘When in the market-place men deal unjustly, and the rulers decree crooked judgment, not regarding the fear of God,’ God sends the storm, and the earthquake, and the tempests, as the executors of his vengeance.

Again, Ulysses says—

'God looks upon the children of men, and punishes the wrong doer.'

And Eumeus—

'The gods love not violence and wrong; but the man whose ways are righteous, him they honour.'

Even when as mere Olympians they put off their celestial nature, and mix in earthly strife, and are thus laid open to earthly suffering, a mystery still hangs about them; Diomed, even while he crosses the path of Ares, feels all the while 'that they are short-lived who contend with the Immortals.' Ajax boasts that he will save himself in spite of heaven, and immediately the wave dashes him upon the rocks. One light word escaped Ulysses in the excitement of his escape from the Cyclops, which nine years of suffering hardly expiated.

The same spirit which teaches Christians that those who have no earthly friend have specially a friend above to care for and to avenge them, taught the Ionians a proverb which appears again and again in Homer, that the stranger and the poor man are the patrimony of God; and it taught them, also, that sometimes men entertained the immortals unawares. It was a faith, too, which was more than words with them; for we hear of no vagrant acts or alien acts, and it was sacrilege to turn away from the gate whoever asked its hospitality. Times are changed. The world was not so crowded as it is now, and perhaps rogues were less abundant; but at any rate those antique Greeks did what they said. We say what they said, while in the same breath we say, too, that it is impossible to do it.

In every way, the dependence of man on a special heavenly Providence was a matter of sure and certain conviction with them. Telemachus appeals to the belief in the Council at Ithaca. He questions it at Pylos, and is at once rebuked by Athene. Both in Iliad and

Odyssey to live justly is the steady service which the gods require, and their favour as surely follows when that service is paid, as a Nemesis sooner or later follows surely, too, on the evil-doers.

But without multiplying evidence, as we easily might, from every part of both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the sceptical and the believing forms of thought and feeling on this very subject are made points of dramatic contrast, to show off the opposition of two separate characters ; and this is clear proof that such thoughts and feelings must have been familiar to Homer's hearers : if it were not so, his characters would have been without interest to his age—they would have been individual, and not universal ; and no expenditure of intellect, or passion, would have made men care to listen to him. The two persons who throughout the *Iliad* stand out in relief in contrast to each other are, of course, Hector and Achilles ; and faith in God (as distinct from a mere recognition of him) is as directly the characteristic of Hector as in Achilles it is entirely absent. Both characters are heroic, but the heroism in them springs from opposite sources. Both are heroic, because both are strong ; but the strength of one is in himself, and the strength of the other is in his faith. Hector is a patriot ; Achilles does not know what patriotism means ;—Hector is full of tenderness and human affection ; Achilles is self-enveloped. Even his love for Patroclus is not pure, for Patroclus is as the moon to the sun of Achilles, and Achilles sees his own glory reflected on his friend. They have both a forecast of their fate ; but Hector, in his great brave way, scoffs at omens ; he knows that there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow, and defies augury. To do his duty is the only omen for which Hector cares ; and if death must be, he can welcome it like

a gallant man, if it find him fighting for his country. Achilles is moody, speculative, and subjective ; he is too proud to attempt an ineffectual resistance to what he knows to be inevitable, but he alternately murmurs at it and scorns it. Till his passion is stirred by his friend's death, he seems equally to disdain the greatness of life and the littleness of it ; the glories of a hero are not worth dying for ; and like Solomon, and almost in Solomon's words, he complains that there is one event to all—

Ἐν δὲ ἦν τιμῆ ἢ μὲν κακὸς ἢ ἐ καὶ ἔσθλός.

To gratify his own spleen, he will accept an inglorious age in Thessaly, in exchange for a hero's immortality ; as again in the end it is but to gratify his own wounded pride that he goes out to brave a fate which he scorns while he knows that it will subdue him. Thus, Achilles is the hero of the stern human, self-sufficing spirit, which does not deny or question destiny, but seeing nothing in it except a cold, iron law, meets force with force, and holds up against it an unbroken, unbending will. Human nature is at its best but a miserable business to him ; death and sorrow are its inevitable lot. As a brave man, he will not fear such things, but he will not pretend to regard them as anything but detestable ; and he comforts the old, weeping king of Troy, whose age he was himself bringing down to the grave in sorrow, with philosophic meditations on the vanity of all things, and a picture of Zeus mixing the elements of life out of the two urns of good and evil.

Turn to Hector, and we pass from shadow into sunlight. Achilles is all self, Hector all self-forgetfulness ; Achilles all pride, Hector all modesty. The confidence of Achilles is in himself and in his own

arm; Hector knows (and the strongest expressions of the kind in all the Iliad are placed pointedly in Hector's mouth) that there is no strength except from above. 'God's will,' he says, 'is over all; he makes the strong man to fear, and gives the victory to the weak, if it shall please him.' And at last, when he meets Achilles, he answers his bitter words, not with a defiance, but calmly saying, 'I know that thou art mighty, and that my strength is far less than thine; but these things lie in the will of the gods, and I, though weaker far than thou, may yet take thy life from thee, if the Immortals choose to have it so.'

So far, then, on the general fact of Divine Providence the feeling of Homer, and therefore of his countrymen, is distinct. Both the great poems bearing his name speak in the same language. But beyond the general fact, many questions rise in the application of the creed, and on one of these (it is among several remarkable differences which seem to make the *Odyssey* as of a later age) there is a very singular discrepancy. In the Iliad, the life of a man on this side the grave is enough for the completion of his destiny—for his reward, if he lives nobly; for his punishment, if he be base or wicked. Without repinings or scepticisms at the apparent successes of bad men, the poet is contented with what he finds, accepting cheerfully the facts of life as they are; it never seems to occur to him as seriously possible that a bad man could succeed or a good one fail; and as the ways of Providence, therefore, require no vindicating, neither his imagination nor his curiosity tempts him into penetrating the future. The house of Hades is the long home to which men go when dismissed out of their bodies; but it is a dim, shadowy place, of which we see nothing, and concerning which no conjectures are ventured.

Achilles, in his passion over Patroclus, cries out, that although the dead forget the dead in the halls of the departed, yet that he will remember his friend ; and through the Iliad there is nothing clearer than these vague words to show with what hopes or fears the poet looked forward to death. So far, therefore, his faith may seem imperfect ; yet, perhaps, not the less noble because imperfect ; religious men in general are too well contented with the promise of a future life, as of a scene where the seeming shortcomings of the Divine administration will be carried out with larger equity. But whether imperfect or not, or whatever be the account of the omission, the theory of Hades in the Odyssey is developed into far greater distinctness ; the future is still, indeed, shadowy, but it is no longer uncertain ; there is the dreadful prison-house, with the judge upon his throne—and the darker criminals are overtaken by the vengeance which was delayed in life. The thin phantoms of the great ones of the past flit to and fro, mourning wearily for their lost mortality, and feeding on its memory. And more than this, as if it were beginning to be felt that something more was wanted after all to satisfy us with the completeness of the Divine rule, we have a glimpse—it is but one, but it is like a ray of sunshine falling in upon the darkness of the grave—‘of the far-off Elysian fields where dwells Rhadamanthus with the golden hair, whose life is ever sweet, and sorrow is not, nor winter, nor any rain or storm, and the never-dying zephyrs blow soft and cool from off the ocean.’

However vague the filling up of such a picture, the outline is correct to the best which has been revealed even in Christianity, and it speaks nobly for the people among whom, even in germ, such ideas could root themselves. But think what we will of their notions of

the future, the old Greek faith, considered as a practical and not a theological system, is truly admirable, clear, rational, and moral; if it does not profess to deal with the mysteries of evil in the heart, it is prompt and stern with them in their darker outward manifestations, and, as far as it goes, as a guide in the common daily business of life, it scarcely leaves anything unsaid.

How far it went we shall see in the details of the life itself, the most important of which in the eyes of a modern will be the social organization; and when he looks for organization, he will be at once at a loss, for he will find the fact of government yet without defined form;—he will find law, but without a public sword to enforce it; and a ‘social machine’ moving without friction under the easy control of opinion. There are no wars of classes, no politics, no opposition of interests, a sacred feeling of the will of the gods keeping every one in his proper subordination. It was a sacred duty that the younger should obey the elder, that the servant should obey his master, that property should be respected; in war, that the leader should be obeyed without questioning; in peace, that public questions should be brought before the assembly of the people, and settled quietly as the Council determined. In this assembly the prince presided, and beyond this presidency his authority at home does not seem to have extended. Of course there was no millennium in Ionia, and men’s passions were pretty much what they are now. Without any organized means of repressing crime when it did appear, the people were exposed to, and often suffered under, extreme forms of violence—violence such as that of the suitors at Ithaca, or of *Ægisthus* at Argos. On the other hand, what a state of cultivation it implies, what peace and comfort in all classes, when society could hold together for a day with

no more complete defence! And, moreover, there are disadvantages in elaborate police systems. Self-reliance is one of the highest virtues in which this world is intended to discipline us; and to depend upon ourselves even for our own personal safety is a large element in moral training.

But not to dwell on this, and to pass to the way in which the men of those days employed themselves.

Our first boy's feeling with the *Iliad* is, that Homer is pre-eminently a poet of war; that battles were his own passion, and tales of battles the delight of his listeners. His heroes appear like a great fighting aristocracy, such as the after Spartans were, Homer himself like another *Tyrtæus*, and the poorer occupations of life too menial for their notice or for his. They seem to live for glory—the one glory worth caring for only to be won upon the battle-field, and their exploits the one worthy theme of the poet's song. This is our boyish impression, and, like other such, it is very different from the truth. If war had been a passion with the Ionians, as it was with the Teutons and the Norsemen, the god of battles would have been supreme in the Pantheon; and Zeus would scarcely have called Ares the most hateful spirit in Olympus—most hateful, *because* of his delight in war and carnage. Mr Carlyle looks forward to a chivalry of labour. He rather wishes than expects that a time may come when the campaign of industry against anarchic nature may gather into it those feelings of gallantry and nobleness which have found their vent hitherto in fighting only. The modern man's work, Mr Carlyle says, is no longer to splinter lances or break down walls, but to break soil, to build barns and factories, and to find a high employment for himself in what hitherto has been despised as degrading. How to elevate labour—how to make it beautiful—how

to enlist the *spirit* in it (for in no other way can it be made humanly profitable), that is the problem which he looks wistfully to the future to solve for us. He may look to the past as well as to the future ; in the old Ionia he will find all for which he wishes. The wise Ulysses built his own house, and carved his own bed. Princes killed and cooked their own food. It was a holy work with them—their way of saying grace for it ; for they offered the animal in his death to the gods, and they were not butchers, but sacrificing priests. Even a keeper of swine is called noble, and fights like a hero ; and the young princess of Phœacia—the loveliest and gracefulest of Homer's women—drove the clothes-cart and washed linen with her own beautiful hands. Not only was labour free—for so it was among the early Romans ; or honourable, so it was among the Israelites,—but it was beautiful—beautiful in the artist's sense, as perhaps elsewhere it has never been. In later Greece—in what we call the glorious period—toil had gathered about it its modern crust of supposed baseness—it was left to slaves ; and wise men, in their philosophic lecture-rooms, spoke of it as unworthy of the higher specimens of cultivated humanity.

But Homer finds, in its most homely forms, fit illustrations for the most glorious achievements of his heroes ; and in every page we find, in smile or metaphor, some common scene of daily life worked out with elaborate beauty. What the popular poet chooses for his illustrations are as good a measure as we can have of the popular feeling, and the images which he suggests are, of course, what he knows his hearers will be pleased to dwell upon. There is much to be said about this, and we shall return to it presently ; in the mean time, we must not build on

indirect evidence. The designs on the shield of Achilles are, together, a complete picture of Homer's microcosm; Homer surely never thought inglorious or ignoble what the immortal art of Hephaistos condescended to imitate.

The first groups of figures point a contrast which is obviously intentional; and the significance becomes sadly earnest when we remember who it was that was to bear the shield. The moral is a very modern one, and the picture might be called by the modern name of Peace and War. There are two cities, embodying in their condition the two ideas. In one, a happy wedding is going forward; the pomp of the hymeneal procession is passing along the streets; the air is full of music, and the women are standing at their doors to gaze. The other is in the terrors of a siege; the hostile armies glitter under the walls, the women and children press into the defence, and crowd to the battlements. In the first city, a quarrel rises, and wrong is made right, not by violence and fresh wrong, but by the majesty of law and order. The heads of the families are sitting gravely in the market-place, the cause is heard, the compensation set, the claim awarded. Under the walls of the other city an ambush lies, like a wild beast on the watch for its prey. The unsuspecting herdsmen pass on with their flocks to the waterside; the spoilers spring from their hiding-place, and all is strife, and death, and horror, and confusion. If there were other war-scenes on the shield, it might be doubted whether Homer intended so strong a contrast as he executed; but fighting for its own sake was evidently held in slight respect with him. The forms of life which he thought really beautiful follow in a series of exquisite Rubens-like pictures: harvest scenes and village festivals, the ploughing and the vintage, or the lion-hunt

on the reedy margin of the river ; and he describes them with a serene, sunny enjoyment which no other old world art or poetry gives us anything in the least resembling. Even we ourselves, in our own pastorals, are struggling with but half success, after what Homer entirely possessed. What a majesty he has thrown into his harvest scene ! The yellow corn falling, the boys following to gather up the large armsfull as they drop behind the reapers ; in the distance a banquet preparing under the trees ; in the centre, in the midst of his workmen, the king sitting in mellow silence, sceptre in hand, looking on with gladdened heart. Again we see the ploughmen, unlike what are to be seen in our corn-grounds, turning their teams at the end of the furrow, and attendants standing ready with the wine-cup, to hand to them as they pass. Homer had seen these things, or he would not have sung of them ; and princes and nobles might have shared such labour without shame, when kings presided over it, and gods designed it, and the divine Achilles bore its image among his insignia in the field.

Analogous to this, and as part of the same feeling, is that intense enjoyment of natural scenery, so keen in Homer, and of which the Athenian poets show not a trace ; as, for instance, in that night landscape by the sea, finished off in a few lines only, but so exquisitely perfect ! The broad moon, gleaming through the mist as it parts suddenly from off the sky ; the crags and headlands, and soft wooded slopes, shining out in the silver light, and earth and sea transformed into fairy land.

We spoke of Homer's similes as illustrative of the Ionic feelings about war. War, of course, was glorious to him—but war in a glorious cause. Wars there were—wars in plenty, as there have been since, and as it

is like there will be for some time to come ; and a just war, of all human employments, is the one which most calls out whatever nobleness there is in man. It was the thing itself, the actual fighting and killing, as apart from the heroism for which it makes opportunities, for which we said that he showed no taste. His manner shows that he felt like a cultivated man, and not like a savage. His spirit stirs in him as he goes out with his hero to the battle ; but there is no drunken delight in blood ; we never hear of warriors as in that grim Hall of the Nibelungen, quenching their thirst in the red stream ; never anything of that fierce exultation in carnage with which the war poetry of so many nations, late and old, is crimsoned. Everything, on the contrary, is contrived so as to soften the merely horrible, and fix our interest only on what is grand or beautiful. We are never left to dwell long together on scenes of death, and when the battle is at its fiercest, our minds are called off by the rapid introduction (either by simile or some softer turn of human feeling) of other associations, not contrived as an inferior artist would contrive, to deepen our emotions, but to soften and relieve them.

Two warriors meet, and exchange their high words of defiance ; we hear the grinding of the spear-head, as it pierces shield and breast-plate, and the crash of the armour, as this or that hero falls. But at once, instead of being left at his side to see him bleed, we are summoned away to the soft water meadow, the lazy river, the tall poplar, now waving its branches against the sky, now lying its length along in the grass beside the water, and the wood-cutter with peaceful industry labouring and lopping at it. In the thick of the universal mêlée, when the stones and arrows are raining on the combatants, and some furious hailstorm

is the slightest illustration with which we should expect him to heighten the effect of the human tempest, so sure Homer is that he has painted the thing itself in its own intense reality, that his simile is the stillest phenomenon in all nature—a stillness of activity, infinitely expressive of the density of the shower of missiles, yet falling like oil on water on the ruffled picture of the battle; the snow descending in the *still* air, covering first hills, then plains and fields and farmsteads; covering the rocks down to the very water's edge, and clogging the waves as they roll in. Again in that fearful death-wrestle at the Grecian wall, when gates and battlements are sprinkled over with blood, and neither Greeks nor Trojans can force their way against the other, we have, first, as an image of the fight itself, two men in the field, with measuring rods, disputing over a land boundary; and for the equipoise of the two armies, the softest of all home scenes, a poor working woman weighing out her wool before weaving it, to earn a scanty subsistence for herself and for her children.

Of course the similes are not all of this kind; it would be monotonous if they were; but they occur often enough to mark their meaning. In the direct narrative, too, we see the same tendency. Sarpedon struck through the thigh is borne off the field, the long spear trailing from the wound, and there is too much haste to draw it out. Hector flies past him and has no time to speak; all is dust, hurry, and confusion. Even Homer can only pause for a moment, but in three lines he lays the wounded hero under a tree, he brings a dear friend to his side, and we refresh ourselves in a beautiful scene, when the lance is taken out and Sarpedon faints, and comes slowly back to life, with the cool air fanning him. We may look in vain through

- the Nibelungen Lied for anything like this. The Swabian poet can be tender before the battle, but in the battle itself his barbaric nature is too strong for him, and he scents nothing but blood. In the Iliad, on the contrary, the very battles of the gods, grand and awful as they are, relieve rather than increase the human horror. In the magnificent scene where Achilles, weary with slaughter, pauses on the bank of the Scamander, and the angry river god, whose course is checked by the bodies of the slain, swells up to revenge them and destroy him, the natural and the supernatural are so strangely blended, that when Poseidon lights the forest, and god meets god and element meets element, the convulsion is too tremendous to enhance the fierceness of Achilles ; it concentrates the interest on itself, and Achilles and Hector, flying Trojan and pursuing Greek, for the time melt out and are forgotten.

We do not forget that there is nothing of this kind, no relief, no softening, in the great scene at the conclusion of the *Odyssey*. All is stern enough and terrible enough there ; more terrible, if possible, because more distinct, than its modern counterpart in Cremhildas Hall. But there is an obvious reason for this, and it does not make against what we have been saying. It is not delight in slaughter, but it is the stern justice of revenge which we have here ; not, as in the *Iliad*, hero meeting hero, but the long crime receiving at last its Divine punishment ; the breaking of the one storm, which from the beginning has been slowly and awfully gathering.

With Homer's treatment of a battle-field, and as illustrating the conclusion which we argue from it, we are tempted to draw parallels from two modern poets—one a German, who was taken away in the morning of

his life ; the other, the most gifted of modern Englishmen. Each of these two has attempted the same subject, and the treatment in each case embodies, in a similar manner, modern ways of thinking about it.

The first is from the 'Albigenses' of young Lenau, who has since died lunatic, we have heard, as he was not unlikely to have died with such thoughts in him. It is the eve which followed one of those terrible struggles at Toulouse, and the poet's imagination is hanging at moon-rise over the scene. 'The low broad field scattered over thick with corpses, all silent, dead, —the last sob spent,'—the priest's thanksgiving for the Catholic victory having died into an echo, and only the 'vultures crying their *Te Deum laudamus*.'

Hat Gott der Herr den Körperstoff erschaffen
 Hat ihn hervorgebracht ein böser Geist,
 Darüber stritten sie mit allen Waffen
 Und werden von den Vögeln nun gespeist,
 Die, ohne ihren Ursprung nachzufragen,
 Die Körper da sich lassen wohl behagen.

'Was it God the Lord who formed the substance of their bodies ? or did some evil spirit bring it forth ? It was for this with all their might they fought, and now they are devoured there by the wild birds, who sit gorging merrily over their carrion, *without asking from whence it came*.'

In Homer, as we saw, the true hero is master over death—death has no terror for him. He meets it, if it is to be, calmly and proudly, and then it is over ; whatever offensive may follow after it, is concealed, or at least passed lightly over. Here, on the contrary, everything most offensive is dwelt upon with an agonizing intensity, and the triumph of death is made to extend, not over the body only, but over the soul, whose heroism it turns to mockery. The cause in which a man dies, is what can make his death beauti-

ful; but here nature herself, in her stern, awful way, is reading her sentence over the cause itself as a wild and frantic dream. We ought to be revolted—doubly revolted, one would think, and yet we are not so; instead of being revolted, we are affected with a sense of vast, sad magnificence. Why is this? Because we lose sight of the scene, or lose the sense of its horror, in the confusion of the spirit. It is the true modern tragedy; the note which sounds through Shakespeare's 'Sonnets,' through 'Hamlet,' through 'Faust.' All the deeper trials of the modern heart might be gathered out of those few lines; the sense of wasted nobleness—nobleness spending its energies upon what time seems to be pronouncing no better than a dream—at any rate, misgivings, sceptic and distracting; yet the heart the while, in spite of the uncertainty of the issue, remaining true to itself. If the spirit of the Albigensian warriors had really broken down, or if the poet had pointed his lesson so as to say, Truth is a lie; faith is folly; eat, drink, and die,—then his picture would have been revolting; but the noble spirit remains, though it is borne down and trifled with by destiny, and therefore it is not revolting but tragic.

Far different from this—as far inferior in tone to Lenau's lines, as it exceeds them in beauty of workmanship—is the well-known picture of the scene under the wall in the Siege of Corinth:—

He saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival;
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb;
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull,
As it slipp'd through their jaws when their edge grew dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed,

So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band :

The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
Close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,
There sate a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey ;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

For a parallel to the horribleness of this wonderfully painted scene we need not go to the *Nibelungen*, for we shall find nothing like it there : we must go back to the carved slabs which adorned the banquet halls of the Assyrian kings, where the foul birds hover over the stricken fields, and trail from their talons the entrails of the slain.

And for what purpose does Byron introduce these frightful images ? Was it in contrast to the exquisite moonlight which tempts the renegade out of his tent ? Was it to bring his mind into a fit condition to be worked upon by the vision of Francesca ? It does but mar and untune the softening influences of nature, which might have been rendered more powerful, perhaps, by some slight touch to remind him of his past day's work, but are blotted out and paralyzed by such a mass of horrors.

To go back to Homer.

We must omit for the present any notice of the domestic pictures, of which there are so many, in the palaces of Ulysses, of Nestor, or of Alcinous ; of the games, so manly, yet, in point of refinement, so superior even to those of our own middle ages ; of the supreme good of life as the Greeks conceived it, and of the arts by which they endeavoured to realize that good. It is

useless to notice such things briefly, and the detail would expand into a volume. But the impression which we gather from them is the same which we have gathered all along—that if the proper aim of all human culture be to combine, in the highest measure in which they are compatible, the two elements of refinement and of manliness, then Homer's age was cultivated to a degree the like of which the earth has not witnessed since. There was more refinement under Pericles, as there is more in modern London and Paris; but there was, and there is, infinitely more vice. There was more fierceness (greater manliness there never was) in the times of feudalism. But take it for all in all, and in a mere human sense, apart from any other aspect of the world which is involved in Christianity, it is difficult to point to a time when life in general was happier, and the character of man set in a more noble form. If we have drawn the picture with too little shadow, let it be allowed for. The shadow was there, doubtless, though we see it only in a few dark spots. The Margites would have supplied the rest, but the Margites, unhappily for us, is lost. Even heroes have their littlenesses, and Comedy is truer to the details of littleness than Tragedy or Epic. The grand is always more or less ideal, and the elevation of a moment is sublimed into the spirit of a life. Comedy, therefore, is essential for the representing of men; and there were times, doubtless, when the complexion of Agamemnon's greatness was discoloured, like Prince Henry's, by remembering, when he was weary, that poor creature—small beer—*i.e.* if the Greeks had got any.

A more serious discoloration, however, we are obliged to say that we find in Homer himself, in the soil or taint which even he is obliged to cast over the position of women. In the Iliad, where there is no

sign of male slavery, women had already fallen under the chain, and though there does not seem to have been any practice of polygamy, the female prisoners fell, as a matter of course, into a more degraded position. It is painful, too, to observe that their own feelings followed the practice of the times, and that they composed themselves to bear without reluctance whatever their destiny forced upon them. When Priam ventured into the Grecian camp for Hector's body, and stood under the roof of Achilles, he endured to do what, as he says, no mortal father had ever yet endured —to give his hand to his son's destroyer. Briseis, whose bed was made desolate by the hand of the same Achilles, finds it her one greatest consolation, that the conqueror stoops to choose her to share his own. And when Hector in his last sad parting scene anticipates a like fate for his own Andromache, it is not with the revolted agony of horror with which such a possible future would be regarded by a modern husband; nor does Andromache, however bitterly she feels the danger, protest, as a modern wife would do, that there was no fear for her—that death by sorrow's hand, or by her own, would preserve her to rejoin him.

Nor, again, was unfaithfulness, of however long duration, conclusively fatal against a wife; for we meet Helen, after a twenty years' elopement, again the quiet, hospitable mistress in the Spartan palace, entertaining her husband's guests with an easy matronly dignity, and not afraid even in Menelaus's presence to allude to the past—in strong terms of self-reproach, indeed, but with nothing like despairing prostration.

Making the worst of this, however, yet even in this respect the Homeric Greeks were better than their contemporaries in Palestine; and on the whole there was, perhaps, no time anterior to Christianity

when women held a higher place, or the relation between wife and husband was of a more free and honourable kind.

For we have given but one side of the picture. When a woman can be the theme of a poet, her nature cannot be held in slight esteem; and there is no doubt that Penelope is Homer's heroine in the *Odyssey*. One design, at least, which Homer had before him was to vindicate the character of the virtuous matron against the stain which Clytemnestra had inflicted on it. Clytemnestra has every advantage, Penelope every difficulty: the trial of the former lasted only half as long as that of the latter. Agamemnon in leaving her gave herself and his house in charge to a divine *δοῦλος*, a heaven-inspired prophet, who should stand between her and temptation, and whom she had to murder before her passion could have its way. Penelope had to bear up alone for twenty weary years, without a friend, without a counsellor, and with even a child whose constancy was wavering. It is obvious that Homer designed this contrast. The story of the Argos tragedy is told again and again. The shade of Agamemnon himself forebodes a fate like his own to Ulysses. It is Ulysses's first thought when he wakes from his sleep to find himself in his own land; and the scene in Hades, in the last book, seems only introduced that the husband of Clytemnestra may meet the shades of the Ithacan suitors, and learn, in their own tale of the sad issue of their wooing, how far otherwise it had fared with Ulysses than with himself. Women, therefore, according to Homer, were as capable of heroic virtue as men were, and the ideal of this heroism is one to which we have scarcely added.

For the rest, there is no trace of any oriental

seraglio system. The sexes lived together in easy unaffected intercourse. The ladies appeared in society naturally and gracefully, and their chief occupations were household matters, care of clothes and linen, and other domestic arrangements. When a guest came, they prepared his dressing-room, settled the bath, and laid out the conveniences of his toilet-table. In their leisure hours, they were to be found, as now, in the hall or the saloon, and their work-table contained pretty much the same materials. Helen was winding worsted as she entertained Telemachus, and Andromache worked roses in very modern cross-stitch. A literalist like Mr Mackay, who finds that the Israelites were cannibals, from such expressions as 'drinking the blood of the slain,' might discover, perhaps, a similar unpleasant propensity in an excited wish of Hecuba, that she might eat the heart of Achilles; but in the absence of other evidence, it is unwise in either case to press a metaphor; and the food of ladies, wherever Homer lets us see it, is very innocent cake and wine, with such fruits as were in season. To judge by Nausicaa, their breeding must have been exquisite. Nausicaa standing still, when the uncouth figure of Ulysses emerged from under the wood, all sea slime and nakedness, and only covered with a girdle of leaves—standing still to meet him when the other girls ran away tittering and terrified, is the perfect conception of true female modesty; and in the whole scene between them, Homer shows the most finished understanding of the delicate and tremulous relations which occur occasionally in the accidents of intercourse between highly cultivated men and women, and which he could only have learnt by living in a society where men and women met and felt in the way which he has described.

Who, then, was Homer? What was he? When did he live? History has absolutely nothing to answer. His poems were not written; for the art of writing (at any rate for a poet's purpose) was unknown to him. There is a vague tradition that the Iliad, and the Odyssey, and a comic poem called the Margites, were composed by an Ionian whose name was Homer, about four hundred years before Herodotus, or in the ninth century B.C. We know certainly that these poems were preserved by the Rhapsodists, or popular reciters, who repeated them at private parties or festivals, until writing came into use, and they were fixed in a less precarious form. A later story was current, that we owe the collection to Pisistratus; but an exclusive claim for him was probably only Athenian conceit. It is incredible that men of genius in Homer's own land—Alcaeus, for instance—should have left such a work to be done by a foreigner. But this is really all which is known; and the creation of the poems lies in impenetrable mystery. Nothing remains to guide us, therefore, except internal evidence (strangely enough, it is the same with Shakespeare), and it has led to wild conclusions; yet the wildest is not without its use; it has commonly something to rest upon; and internal evidence is only really valuable when outward testimony has been sifted to the uttermost. The present opinion seems to be, that each poem is unquestionably the work of one man; but whether both poems are the work of the same is yet *sub judice*. The Greeks believed they were; and that is much. There are remarkable points of resemblance in style, yet not greater than the resemblances in the 'Two Noble Kinsmen' and in the 'Yorkshire Tragedy' to 'Macbeth' and 'Hamlet'; and there are more remarkable points of non-resemblance, which deepen

upon us the more we read. On the other hand, tradition is absolute. If the style of the *Odyssey* is sometimes unlike the *Iliad*, so is one part of the *Iliad* sometimes unlike another. It is hard to conceive a genius equal to the creation of either *Iliad* or *Odyssey* to have existed without leaving so much as a legend of his name; and the difficulty of criticizing style accurately in an old language will be appreciated by those who have tried their hand in their own language with the disputed plays of Shakespeare. There are heavy difficulties every way; and we shall best conclude our own subject by noting down briefly the most striking points of variation of which as yet no explanation has been attempted. We have already noticed several: the non-appearance of male slavery in the *Iliad* which is common in the *Odyssey*; the notion of a future state; and perhaps a fuller cultivation in the female character. Andromache is as delicate as Nausicaa, but she is not as grand as Penelope; and in marked contrast to the feeling expressed by Briseis, is the passage where the grief of Ulysses over the song of Demodocus is compared to the grief of a young wife flinging herself on the yet warm body of her husband, and looking forward to her impending slavery with feelings of horror and repulsion. But these are among the slightest points in which the two poems are dissimilar. Not only are there slaves in the *Odyssey*, but there are *θῆτες*, or serfs, an order with which we are familiar in later times, but which again are not in the *Iliad*. In the *Odyssey* the Trojans are called *ἐπιθήτες ἵππων*, which must mean *riders*. In the *Iliad*, horses are never ridden; they are always in harness.

Wherever in the *Odyssey* the Trojan war is alluded to (and it is very often), in no one case is the allusion

to anything which is mentioned in the Iliad. We hear of the wooden horse, the taking of Troy, the death of Achilles, the contention of Ulysses with Ajax for his arms. It might be said that the poet wished to supply afterwards indirectly what he had left in the Iliad untold ; but again, this is impossible, for a very curious reason. The Iliad opens with the wrath of Achilles, which caused such bitter woe to the Achaians. In the Odyssey it is still the wrath of Achilles ; but singularly *not with Agamemnon, but with Ulysses*. Ulysses to the author of the Odyssey was a far grander person at *Troy* than he appears in the Iliad. In the latter poem he is great, but far from one of the greatest ; in the other, he is evidently the next to Achilles ; and it seems almost certain that whoever wrote the Odyssey was working from some other legend of the war. There were a thousand versions of it. The tale of Ilium was set to every lyre in Greece, and the relative position of the heroes was doubtless varied according to the sympathies or the patriotism of the singer. The character of Ulysses is much stronger in the Odyssey ; and even when the same qualities are attributed to him—his soft-flowing tongue, his cunning, and his eloquence—they are held in very different estimation. The Homer of the Iliad has little liking for a talker. Thersites is his pattern specimen of such ; and it is the current scoff at unready warriors to praise their father's courage, and then to add—

ἀλλὰ τὸν νῖδνον
γείναρο εἴσο χέρηα μάχη, ἀγορῆ δέ τ' ἀμείνων.

But the Phœcian Lord who ventured to reflect, in the Iliad style, on the supposed unreadiness of Ulysses, is taught a different notion of human excellence. Ulysses tells him that he is a fool. 'The gods,' Ulysses says, 'do not give all good things to all men, and often a

man is made unfair to look upon, but over his ill favour they fling, like a garland, a power of lovely speech, and the people delight to *look* on him. He speaks with modest dignity, and he shines among the multitude. As he walks through the city, men gaze on him as on a god.'

Differences like these, however, are far from decisive. The very slightest external evidence would weigh them all down together. Perhaps the following may be of more importance:—

In both poems there are 'questionings of destiny,' as the modern phrase goes. The thing which we call human life is looked in the face—this little chequered island of lights and shadows, in the middle of an ocean of darkness; and in each we see the sort of answer which the poet finds for himself, and which might be summed up briefly in the last words of Ecclesiastes, 'Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.' But the world bears a different aspect, and the answer looks different in its application. In the Iliad, in spite of the gloom of Achilles, and his complaint of the double urn, the sense of life, on the whole, is sunny and cheerful. There is no yearning for anything beyond—nothing vague, nothing mystical. The earth, the men, the gods, have all a palpable reality about them. From first to last, we know where we are, and what we are about. In the Odyssey we are breathing another atmosphere. The speculations on the moral mysteries of our being hang like a mist over us from the beginning to the end; and the cloud from time to time descends on the actors and envelopes them with a preternatural halo. The poet evidently dislikes the expression of 'suffering being the lot of mortals,' as if it had been abused already for ungodly purposes. In

the opening of the first book, Zeus reproves the folly of mortal men for casting the blame upon the gods when they themselves, in spite of all the gods can do to save them, persist in their own perverseness; and we never know as we go on, so fast we pass from one to the other, when we are among mere human beings, and when among the spiritual or the mystical. Those sea-nymphs, those cannibals, those enchantresses, if intended to be real, are neither mortal nor divine—at any rate, like nothing divine which we had seen in Olympus, or on the plains of Ilium; and at times there is a strangeness even in the hero himself. Sometimes it is Ulysses painfully toiling his way home across the unknown ocean; sometimes it is we that are Ulysses, and that unknown ocean is the life across which we are wandering, with too many Circes, and Sirens, and 'Isles of Error' in our path. In the same spirit death is no longer the end; and on every side long vistas seem to stretch away into the infinite, peopled with shadowy forms.

But, as if this palpable initiation into the unseen were still insufficient or unconvincing, the common ground on which we are treading sometimes shakes under us, and we feel as Humboldt describes himself to have felt at the first shock of an earthquake. Strange pieces of mysterious wildness are let fall in our way, coming suddenly on us like spectres, and vanishing without explanation or hint of their purpose. What are those Phœcian ships meant for, which required neither sail nor oar, but of their own selves read the hearts of those they carried, and bore them wherever they would go?—or the wild end of the ship which carried Ulysses home?—or that terrible piece of second sight in the Hall at Ithaca, for which the seer was brought from Pylos?—or those islands,

one of which is for ever wasting while another is born into being to complete the number?—or those mystical sheep and oxen, which knew neither age nor death, nor ever had offspring born to them, and whose flesh upon the spits began to crawl and bellow?—or Helen singing round the horse inside the Trojan walls, when every Grecian chief's heart fainted in him as he thought he heard the voice of his own dear wife far away beyond the sea?

In the far gates of the Lœstrygones, 'where such a narrow rim of night divided day from day, that a man who needed not sleep might earn a double hire, and the cry of the shepherd at evening driving home his flock was heard by the shepherd going out in the morning to pasture,' we have, perhaps, some tale of a Phœnician mariner who had wandered into the North Seas, and seen 'the Norway sun set into sunrise.' But what shall we say to that Syrian isle, 'where disease is not, nor hunger, nor thirst, and where, when men grow old, Apollo comes with Artemis, and slays them with his silver bow?' There is nothing in the *Iliad* like any of these stories.

Yet, when all is said, it matters little who wrote the poems. Each is so magnificent, that to have written both could scarcely have increased the greatness of the man who had written one; and if there were two Homers, the earth is richer by one more divine-gifted man than we had known. After all, it is perhaps more easy to believe that the differences which we seem to see arise from Homer's own choice of the material which best suited two works so different, than that nature was so largely prodigal as to have created in one age and in one people two such men; for whether one or two, the authors of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* stand alone with Shakespeare far away above mankind.

THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

1850.

If the enormous undertaking of the Bollandist editors had been completed, it would have contained the histories of 25,000 saints. So many the Catholic Church acknowledged and accepted as her ideals—as men who had not only done her honour by the eminence of their sanctity, but who had received while on earth an openly Divine recognition of it in gifts of supernatural power. And this vast number is but a selection; the editors chose only out of the mass before them what was most noteworthy and trustworthy, and what was of catholic rather than of national interest. It is no more than a fraction of that singular mythology which for so many ages delighted the Christian world, which is still held in external reverence among the Romanists, and of which the modern historians, provoked by its feeble supernaturalism, and by the entire absence of critical ability among its writers to distinguish between fact and fable, have hitherto failed to speak a reasonable word. Of the attempt in our own day to revive an interest in them we shall say little in this place. The 'Lives' have no form or beauty to give them attraction in themselves; and for their human interest the broad atmosphere of the world suited ill with these delicate

plants, which had grown up under the shadow of the convent wall ; they were exotics, not from another climate, but from another age ; the breath of scorn fell on them, and having no root in the hearts and beliefs of men any more, but only in the sentimentalities and make-beliefs, they withered and sank. And yet, in their place as historical phenomena, the legends of the saints are as remarkable as any of the Pagan mythologies ; to the full as remarkable, perhaps far more so, if the length and firmness of hold they once possessed on the convictions of mankind is to pass for anything in the estimate—and to ourselves they have a near and peculiar interest, as spiritual facts in the growth of the Catholic faith.

Philosophy has rescued the old theogonies from ridicule ; their extravagancies, even the most grotesque of them, can be now seen to have their root in an idea, often a deep one, representing features of natural history or of metaphysical speculation, and we do not laugh at them any more. In their origin, they were the consecration of the first-fruits of knowledge ; the expression of a real reverential belief. Then time did its work on them ; knowledge grew, and they could not grow ; they became monstrous and mischievous, and were driven out by Christianity with scorn and indignation. But it is with human institutions as it is with men themselves ; we are tender with the dead when their power to hurt us has passed away ; and as Paganism can never more be dangerous, we have been able to command a calmer attitude towards it, and to detect under its most repulsive features sufficient latent elements of genuine thought to satisfy us that even in their darkest aberrations men are never wholly given over to falsehood and absurdity. When philosophy has done for mediæval mythology what it has done

for Hesiod and for the Edda, we shall find there also at least as deep a sense of the awfulness and mystery of life, and we shall find a moral element which the Pagans never had. The lives of the saints are always simple, often childish, seldom beautiful ; yet, as Goethe observed, if without beauty, they are always good.

And as a phenomenon, let us not deceive ourselves on the magnitude of the Christian hagiology. The Bollandists were restricted on many sides. They took only what was in Latin—while every country in Europe had its own home growth in its own language—and thus many of the most characteristic of the lives are not to be found at all in their collection. And again, they took but one life of each saint, composed in all cases late, and compiled out of the mass of various shorter lives which had grown up in different localities out of popular tradition ; so that many of their longer productions have an elaborate literary character, with an appearance of artifice, which, till we know how they came into existence, might blind us to the vast width and variety of the traditional sources from which they are drawn. In the twelfth century there were sixty-six lives extant of St Patrick alone ; and that in a country where every parish had its own special saint and special legend of him. These sixty-six lives may have contained (Mr Gibbon says *must* have contained) at least as many thousand lies. Perhaps so. To severe criticism, even the existence of a single apostle, St Patrick, appears problematical. But at least there is the historical fact, about which there can be no mistake, that the stories did grow up in some way or other, that they were repeated, sung, listened to, written, and read ; that these lives in Ireland, and all over Europe and over the earth, wherever the Catholic faith was preached, stories like these, sprang out of the heart of the people, and

grew and shadowed over the entire believing mind of the Catholic world. Wherever church was founded, or soil was consecrated for the long resting-place of those who had died in the faith ; wherever the sweet bells of convent or of monastery were heard in the evening air, charming the unquiet world to rest and remembrance of God ; there dwelt the memory of some apostle who had laid the first stone, there was the sepulchre of some martyr whose relics reposed beneath the altar, of some confessor who had suffered there for his Master's sake, of some holy ascetic who in silent self-chosen austerity had woven a ladder there of prayer and penance, on which the angels of God were believed to have ascended and descended. It is not a phenomenon of an age or of a century ; it is characteristic of the history of Christianity. From the time when the first preachers of the faith passed out from their homes by that quiet Galilean lake, to go to and fro over the earth, and did their mighty work, and at last disappeared and were not any more seen, these sacred legends began to grow. Those who had once known the Apostles, who had drawn from their lips the blessed message of light and life, one and all would gather together what fragments they could find of their stories. Rumours blew in from all the winds. They had been seen here, had been seen there, in the farthest corners of the earth, preaching, contending, suffering, prevailing. Affection did not stay to scrutinize. When some member of a family among ourselves is absent in some far place from which sure news of him comes slowly and uncertainly ; if he has been in the army, or on some dangerous expedition, or at sea, or anywhere where real or imaginary dangers stimulate anxiety ; or when one is gone away from us altogether—fallen perhaps in battle—and when the story of his end can be collected but fitfully from

strangers, who only knew his name, but had heard him nobly spoken of; the faintest threads are caught at; reports, the vagueness of which might be evident to indifference, are to love strong grounds of confidence, and 'trifles light as air' establish themselves as certainties. So, in those first Christian communities, travellers came through from east and west; legions on the march, or caravans of wandering merchants; and one had been in Rome, and seen Peter disputing with Simon Magus; another in India, where he had heard St Thomas preaching to the Brahmins; a third brought with him, from the wilds of Britain, a staff which he had cut, as he said, from a thorn tree, the seed of which St Joseph had sown there, and which had grown to its full size in a single night, making merchandise of the precious relic out of the credulity of the believers. So the legends grew, and were treasured up, and loved, and trusted; and alas! all which we have been able to do with them is to call them lies, and to point a shallow moral on the impostures and credulities of the early Catholics. An Atheist could not wish us to say more. If we can really believe that the Christian Church was made over in its very cradle to lies and to the father of lies, and was allowed to remain in his keeping, so to say, till yesterday, he will not much trouble himself with any faith which after such an admission we may profess to entertain. For, as this spirit began in the first age in which the Church began to have a history, so it continued so long as the Church as an integral body retained its vitality, and only died out in the degeneracy which preceded and which brought on the Reformation. For fourteen hundred years these stories held their place and rang on from age to age, from century to century; as the new faith widened its boundaries, and numbered ever more and more great

names of men and women who had fought and died for it, so long their histories, living in the hearts of those for whom they laboured, laid hold of them and filled them ; and the devout imagination, possessed with what was often no more than the rumour of a name, bodied it out into life, and form, and reality. And doubtless, if we try them by any historical canon, we have to say that quite endless untruths grew in this way to be believed among men ; and not believed only, but held sacred, passionately and devotedly ; not filling the history books only, not only serving to amuse and edify the refectory, or to furnish matter for meditation in the cell, but claiming days for themselves of special remembrance, entering into liturgies and inspiring prayers, forming the spiritual nucleus of the hopes and fears of millions of human souls.

From the hard barren standing ground of the fact idolator, what a strange sight must be that still mountain-peak on the wild west Irish shore, where, for more than ten centuries, a rude old bell and a carved chip of oak have witnessed, or seemed to witness, to the presence long ago there of the Irish apostle ; and where, in the sharp crystals of the trap rock, a path has been worn smooth by the bare feet and bleeding knees of the pilgrims, who still, in the August weather, drag their painful way along it as they have done for a thousand years ! Doubtless the 'Lives of the Saints' are full of lies. Are there none in the *Iliad* ? or in the legends of *Æneas* ? Were the stories sung in the liturgy of Eleusis all so true ? so true as fact ? Are the songs of the Cid or of Siegfried true ? We say nothing of the lies in these ; but why ? Oh, it will be said, but they are fictions ; they were never supposed to be true. But they *were* supposed to be true, to the full as true as the 'Legenda Aurea.' Oh, then, they are poetry ; and

besides they have nothing to do with Christianity. Yes, that is it ; they have nothing to do with Christianity. Religion has grown such a solemn business with us, and we bring such long faces to it, that we cannot admit or conceive to be at all naturally admissible such a light companion as the imagination. The distinction between secular and religious has been extended even to the faculties ; and we cannot tolerate in others the fulness and freedom which we have lost or rejected for ourselves. Yet it has been a fatal mistake with the critics. They found themselves off the recognized ground of Romance and Paganism, and they failed to see the same principles at work, though at work with new materials. In the records of all human affairs, it cannot be too often insisted on that two kinds of truth run for ever side by side, or rather, crossing in and out with each other, form the warp and the woof of the coloured web which we call history : the one, the literal and external truths corresponding to the eternal and as yet undiscovered laws of fact ; the other, the truths of feeling and of thought, which embody themselves either in distorted pictures of outward things, or in some entirely new creation—sometimes moulding and shaping real history ; sometimes taking the form of heroic biography, of tradition, or popular legend ; sometimes appearing as recognized fiction in the epic, the drama, or the novel. It is useless to tell us that this is to confuse truth and falsehood. We are stating a fact, not a theory ; and if it makes truth and falsehood difficult to distinguish, that is nature's fault, not ours. Fiction is only false, when it is false, not to fact, else how could it be fiction ? but when it is—to *law*. To try it by its correspondence to the real is pedantry. Imagination creates as nature creates, by the force which is in man, which refuses to be restrained ; we cannot help it,

and we are only false when we make monsters, or when we pretend that our inventions are facts, when we substitute truths of one kind for truths of another ; when we substitute,—and again we must say when we *intentionally* substitute :—whenever persons and whenever facts seize strongly on the imagination (and of course when there is anything remarkable in them they must and will do so), invention glides into the images which form in our minds ; so it must be, and so it ever has been, from the first legends of a cosmogony to the written life of the great man who died last year or century, or to the latest scientific magazine. We cannot relate facts as they are ; they must first pass through ourselves, and we are more or less than mortal if they gather nothing in the transit. The great outlines alone lie around us as imperative and constraining ; the detail we each fill up variously, according to the turn of our sympathies, the extent of our knowledge, or our general theories of things : and therefore it may be said that the only literally true history possible is the history which mind has left of itself in all the changes through which it has passed.

Suetonius is to the full as extravagant and superstitious as Surius, and Suetonius was most laborious and careful, and was the friend of Tacitus and Pliny. Suetonius gives us prodigies, where Surius has miracles, but that is all the difference ; each follows the form of the supernatural which belonged to the genius of his age. Plutarch writes a life of Lycurgus, with details of his childhood, and of the trials and vicissitudes of his age ; and the existence of Lycurgus is now quite as questionable as that of St Patrick or of St George of England.

No rectitude of intention will save us from mistakes. Sympathies and antipathies are but *synonyms*

of prejudice, and indifference is impossible. Love is blind, and so is every other passion. Love believes eagerly what it desires ; it excuses or passes lightly over blemishes, it dwells on what is beautiful ; while dislike sees a tarnish on what is brightest, and deepens faults into vices. Do we believe that all this is a disease of unenlightened times, and that in our strong sunlight only truth can get received ?—then let us contrast the portrait, for instance, of Sir Robert Peel as it is drawn in the Free Trade Hall at Manchester,¹ at the county meeting, and in the Oxford Common Room. It is not so. Faithful and literal history is possible only to an impassive spirit. Man will never write it, until perfect knowledge and perfect faith in God shall enable him to see and endure every fact in its reality ; until perfect love shall kindle in him under its touch the one just emotion which is in harmony with the eternal order of all things.

How far we are in these days from approximating to such a combination we need not here insist. Criticism in the hands of men like Niebuhr seems to have accomplished great intellectual triumphs ; and in Germany and France, and among ourselves, we have our new schools of the philosophy of history ; yet their real successes have hitherto only been destructive. When philosophy reconstructs, it does nothing but project its own idea ; when it throws off tradition, it cannot work without a theory : and what is a theory but an imperfect generalization caught up by a pre-disposition ? What is Comte's great division of the eras but a theory, and facts are but as clay in his hands, which he can mould to illustrate it, as every clever man will find facts to be, let his theory be what it will ? Intellect can destroy, but it cannot restore life ;

¹ Written in 1850.

call in the creative faculties—call in Love, Idea, Imagination, and we have living figures, but we cannot tell whether they are figures which ever lived before. The high faith in which Love and Intellect can alone unite in their fulness, has not yet found utterance in modern historians.

The greatest man who has as yet given himself to the recording of human affairs is, beyond question, Cornelius Tacitus. Alone in Tacitus a serene calmness of insight was compatible with intensity of feeling. He took no side; he may have been Imperialist, he may have been Republican, but he has left no sign whether he was either: he appears to have sifted facts with scrupulous integrity; to administer his love, his scorn, his hatred, according only to individual merit: and his sentiments are rather felt by the reader in the life-like clearness of his portraits, than expressed in words by himself. Yet such a power of seeing into things was only possible to him, because there was no party left with which he could determinedly side, and no wide spirit alive in Rome through which he could feel. The spirit of Rome, the spirit of life had gone away to seek other forms, and the world of Tacitus was a heap of decaying institutions; a stage where men and women, as they themselves were individually base or noble, played over their little parts. Life indeed was come into the world, was working in it, and silently shaping the old dead corpse into fresh and beautiful being. Tacitus alludes to it once only, in one brief scornful chapter; and the most poorly gifted of those forlorn biographers whose unreasoning credulity was piling up the legends of St Mary and the Apostles, which now drive the ecclesiastical historian to despair, knew more, in his divine hope and faith, of the real spirit which had gone out among mankind, than the keenest and

gravest intellect which ever set itself to contemplate them.

And now having in some degree cleared the ground of difficulties, let us go back to the Lives of the Saints. If Bede tells us lies about St Cuthbert, we will disbelieve his stories; but we will not call Bede a liar, even though he prefaces his life with a declaration that he has set down nothing but what he has ascertained on the clearest evidence. We are driven to no such alternative; our canons of criticism are different from Bede's, and so are our notions of probability. Bede would expect *a priori*, and would therefore consider as sufficiently attested by a consent of popular tradition, what the oaths of living witnesses would fail to make credible to a modern English jury. We will call Bede a liar only if he put forward his picture of St Cuthbert as a picture of a life which he considered admirable and excellent, as one after which he was endeavouring to model his own, and which he held up as a pattern of imitation, when in his heart he did not consider it admirable at all, when he was making no effort at the austerities which he was lauding. The histories of the saints are written as ideals of a Christian life; they have no elaborate and beautiful forms; single and straightforward as they are,—if they are not this they are nothing. For fourteen centuries the religious mind of the Catholic world threw them out as its form of hero worship, as the heroic patterns of a form of human life which each Christian within his own limits was endeavouring to realize. The first martyrs and confessors were to those poor monks what the first Dorian conquerors were in the war songs of Tyrtaeus, what Achilles and Ajax and Agamemnon and Diomed were wherever Homer was sung or read; or in more modern times, what the Knights of the Round Table were in the

halls of the Norman castles. The Catholic mind was expressing its conception of the highest human excellence ; and the result is that immense and elaborate hagiology. As with the battle heroes, too, the inspiration lies in the universal idea ; the varieties of character (with here and there an exception) are slight and unimportant ; the object being to create examples for universal human imitation. Lancelot or Tristram were equally true to the spirit of chivalry ; and Patrick on the mountain, or Antony in the desert, are equal models of patient austerity. The knights fight with giants, enchanterers, robbers, unknightly nobles, or furious wild beasts ; the Christians fight with the world, the flesh, and the devil. The knight leaves the comforts of home in quest of adventures, the saint in quest of penance, and on the bare rocks or in desolate wildernesses subdues the devil in his flesh with prayers and penances ; and so alien is it all to the whole thought and system of the modern Christian, that he either rejects such stories altogether as monks' impostures, or receives them with disdainful wonder, as one more shameful form of superstition with which human nature has insulted heaven and disgraced itself.

Leaving, however, for the present, the meaning of monastic asceticism, it seems necessary to insist that there really was such a thing ; there is no doubt about it. If the particular actions told of each saint are not literally true as belonging to him, abundance of men did for many centuries lead the sort of life which saints are said to have led. We have got a notion that the friars were a snug, comfortable set, after all ; and the life in a monastery pretty much like that in a modern university, where the old monks' language and affectation of unworldliness does somehow contrive to co-exist with as large a mass of bodily enjoyment as man's

nature can well appropriate. Very likely this was the state into which many of the monasteries had fallen in the fifteenth century. It was a symptom of a very rapid disorder which had set in among them, and which promptly terminated in dissolution. But long, long ages lay behind the fifteenth century, in which, wisely or foolishly, these old monks and hermits did make themselves a very hard life of it ; and the legend only exceeded the reality in being a very slightly idealized portrait. We are not speaking of the miracles ; that is a wholly different question. When men knew little of the order of nature, whatever came to pass without obvious cause was at once set down to influences beyond nature and above it ; and so long as there were witches and enchanters, strong with the help of the bad powers, of course the especial servants of God would not be left without graces to outmatch and overcome the devil. And there were many other reasons why the saints should work miracles. They had done so under the old dispensation, and there was no obvious reason why Christians should be worse off than Jews. And again, although it be true, in the modern phrase, which is beginning to savour a little of cant, that the highest natural is the highest supernatural, nevertheless natural facts permit us to be so easily familiar with them, that they have an air of commonness ; and when we have a vast idea to express, there is always a disposition to the extraordinary. But the miracles are not the chief thing ; nor ever were they so. Men did not become saints by working miracles, but they worked miracles because they had become saints ; and the instructiveness and value of their lives lay in the means which they had used to make themselves what they were ; and as we said, in this part of the business there is unquestionable basis of truth—scarcely even exagger-

ation. We have documentary evidence, which has been filtered through the sharp ordeal of party hatred, of the way in which some men (and those, not mere ignorant fanatics, but men of vast mind and vast influence in their days) conducted themselves, where *myth* has no room to enter. We know something of the hair-shirt of Thomas à Becket; and there was another poor monk, whose asceticism imagination could not easily outrun; he who, when the earth's mighty ones were banded together to crush him under their armed heels, spoke but one little word, and it fell among them like the spear of Cadmus; the strong ones turned their hands against each other, and the armies melted away; and the proudest monarch of the earth lay at that monk's threshold three winter nights in the scanty clothing of penance, suing miserably for forgiveness. Or again, to take a fairer figure. There is a poem extant, the genuineness of which, we believe, has not been challenged, composed by Columbkill, commonly called St Columba. He was a hermit in Arran, a rocky island in the Atlantic, outside Galway Bay; from which he was summoned, we do not know how, but in a manner which appeared to him to be a Divine call, to go away and be Bishop of Iona. The poem is a 'Farewell to Arran,' which he wrote on leaving it; and he lets us see something of a hermit's life there. 'Farewell,' he begins (we are obliged to quote from memory), 'a long farewell to thee, Arran of my heart. Paradise is with thee; the garden of God within the sound of thy bells. The angels love Arran. Each day an angel comes there to join in its services.' And then he goes on to describe his 'dear cell,' and the holy happy hours which he had spent there, 'with the wind whistling through the loose stones, and the sea spray hanging on his hair.' Arran is no better

than a wild rock. It is strewed over with the ruins which may still be seen of the old hermitages ; and at their best they could have been but such places as sheep would huddle under in a storm, and shiver in the cold and wet which would pierce through the chinks of the walls.

Or, if written evidence be too untrustworthy, there are silent witnesses which cannot lie, that tell the same touching story. Whoever loiters among the ruins of a monastery will see, commonly leading out of the cloisters, rows of cellars half under-ground, low, damp, and wretched-looking ; an earthen floor, bearing no trace of pavement ; a roof from which the mortar and the damp keep up (and always must have kept up) a perpetual ooze ; for a window a narrow slip in the wall, through which the cold and the wind find as free an access as the light. Such as they are, a well-kept dog would object to accept a night's lodging in them ; and if they had been prison cells, thousands of philanthropic tongues would have trumpeted out their horrors. The stranger perhaps supposes that they were the very dungeons of which he has heard such terrible things. He asks his guide, and his guide tells him they were the monks' dormitories. Yes ; there on that wet soil, with that dripping roof above them, was the self-chosen home of those poor men. Through winter frost, through rain and storm, through summer sunshine, generation after generation of them, there they lived and prayed, and at last lay down and died.

It is all gone now—gone as if it had never been ; and it was as foolish as, if the attempt had succeeded, it would have been mischievous, to revive a devotional interest in the Lives of the Saints. It would have produced but one more unreality in an age already too full of such. No one supposes we should have set to

work to live as they lived ; that any man, however earnest in his religion, would have gone looking for earth floors and wet dungeons, or wild islands to live in, when he could get anything better. Either we are wiser, or more humane, or more self-indulgent ; at any rate we are something which divides us from mediæval Christianity by an impassable gulf which this age or this epoch will not see bridged over. Nevertheless, these modern hagiologists, however wrongly they went to work at it, had detected, and were endeavouring to fill, a very serious blank in our educational system ; a very serious blank indeed, and one which, somehow, we must contrive to get filled if the education of character is ever to be more than a name with us. To try and teach people how to live without giving them examples in which our rules are illustrated, is like teaching them to draw by the rules of perspective, and of light and shade, without designs in which to study the effects ; or to write verse by the laws of rhyme and metre, without song or poem in which rhyme and metre are exhibited. It is a principle which we have forgotten, and it is one which the old Catholics did not forget. We do not mean that they set out with saying to themselves, 'We must have examples, we must have ideals ;' very likely they never thought about it at all ; love for their holy men, and a thirst to know about them, produced the histories ; and love unconsciously working gave them the best for which they could have wished. The boy at school at the monastery, the young monk disciplining himself as yet with difficulty under the austerities to which he had devoted himself, the old one halting on toward the close of his pilgrimage,—all of them had before their eyes, in the legend of the patron saint, a personal realization of all they were trying after ; leading them on, beckoning to them, and pointing, as they

stumbled among their difficulties, to the marks which his own footsteps had left, as he had trod that hard path before them. It was as if the Church was for ever saying to them :—‘ You have doubts and fears, and trials and temptations, outward and inward ; you have sinned, perhaps, and feel the burden of your sin. Here was one who, like you, *in this very spot*, under the same sky, treading the same soil, among the same hills and woods and rocks and rivers, was tried like you, tempted like you, sinned like you ; but here he prayed, and persevered, and did penance, and washed out his sins ; he fought the fight, he vanquished the Evil One, he triumphed, and now he reigns a saint with Christ in heaven. The same ground which yields you your food, once supplied him ; he breathed, and lived, and felt, and died *here* ; and now, from his throne in the sky, he is still looking lovingly down on his children, making intercession for you that you may have grace to follow him, that by-and-by he may himself offer you at God’s throne as his own.’ It is impossible to measure the influence which a personal reality of this kind must have exercised on the mind, thus daily and hourly impressed upon it through a life ; there is nothing vague any more, no abstract excellences to strain after ; all is distinct, personal, palpable. It is no dream. The saint’s bones are under the altar ; nay, perhaps, his very form and features undissolved. Under some late abbot the coffin may have been opened and the body seen without mark or taint of decay. Such things have been, and the emaciation of a saint will account for it without a miracle. Daily some incident of his story is read aloud, or spoken of, or preached upon. In quaint beautiful forms it lives in light in the long chapel windows ; and in the summer matins his figure, lighted up in splendour, gleams down on the congregation as

they pray, or streams in mysterious tints along the pavement, clad, as it seems, in soft celestial glory, and shining as he shines in heaven. Alas, alas! where is it all gone?

We are going to venture a few thoughts on the wide question, what possibly may have been the meaning of so large a portion of the human race, and so many centuries of Christianity, having been surrendered and seemingly sacrificed to the working out this dreary asceticism. If right once, then it is right now; if now worthless, then it could never have been more than worthless; and the energies which spent themselves on it were like corn sown upon the rock, or substance given for that which is not bread. We supposed ourselves challenged recently for our facts. Here is an enormous fact which there is no evading. It is not to be slurred over with indolent generalities, with unmeaning talk of superstition, of the twilight of the understanding, of barbarism, and of nursery credulity; it is matter for the philosophy of history, if the philosophy has yet been born which can deal with it; one of the solid, experienced facts in the story of mankind which must be accepted and considered with that respectful deference which all facts claim of their several sciences, and which will certainly not disclose its meaning (supposing it to have a meaning) except to reverence, to sympathy, to love. We must remember that the men who wrote these stories, and who practised these austerities, were the same men who composed our liturgies, who built our churches and our cathedrals—and the gothic cathedral is, perhaps, on the whole, the most magnificent creation which the mind of man has as yet thrown out of itself. If there be any such thing as a philosophy of history, real or possible, it is in virtue of there being certain progressive organizing laws in

which the fretful lives of each of us are gathered into and subordinated in some larger unity, through which age is linked to age, as we move forward, with an horizon expanding and advancing. And if this is true, the magnitude of any human phenomenon is a criterion of its importance, and definite forms of thought working through long historic periods imply an effect of one of these vast laws—imply a distinct step in human progress. Something previously unrealized is being lived out, and rooted in to the heart of mankind.

Nature never half does her work. She goes over it, and over it, to make assurance sure, and makes good her ground with wearying repetition. A single section of a short paper is but a small space to enter on so vast an enterprise; nevertheless, a few very general words shall be ventured as a suggestion of what this monastic or saintly spirit may possibly have meant.

First, as the spirit of Christianity is antagonistic to the world, whatever form the spirit of the world assumes, the ideals of Christianity will of course be their opposite; as one verges into one extreme, the other will verge into the contrary. In those rough times the law was the sword; animal might of arm, and the strong animal heart which guided it, were the excellences which the world rewarded; and monasticism, therefore, in its position of protest, would be the destruction and abnegation of the animal nature. The war hero in the battle or the tourney yard might be taken as the apotheosis of the fleshly man—the saint in the desert of the spiritual.

But this interpretation is slight, imperfect, and if true at all only partially so. The animal and the spiritual are not contradictionaries; they are the complements in the perfect character; and in the middle ages, as in all ages of genuine earnestness, they inter-

fused and penetrated each other. There were warrior saints, and saintly warriors ; and those grand old figures which sleep cross-legged in the cathedral aisles were something higher than only one more form of the beast of prey. Monasticism represented something more positive than a protest against the world. We believe it to have been the realization of the infinite loveliness and beauty of personal purity.

In the earlier civilization, the Greeks, however genuine their reverence for the gods, do not seem to have supposed any part of their duty to the gods to consist in keeping their bodies untainted. Exquisite as was their sense of beauty, of beauty of mind as well as beauty of form, with all their loftiness and their nobleness, with their ready love of moral excellence when manifested, as fortitude, or devotion to liberty and to home, they had little or no idea of what we mean by morality. With a few rare exceptions, pollution, too detestable to be even named among ourselves, was of familiar and daily occurrence among their greatest men ; was no reproach to philosopher or to statesman ; and was not supposed to be incompatible, and was not, in fact, incompatible with any of those especial excellences which we so admire in the Greek character.

Among the Romans (that is, the early Romans of the republic) there was a sufficiently austere morality. A public officer of state, whose business was to inquire into the private lives of the citizens, and to punish offences against morals, is a phenomenon which we have seen only once on this planet. There was never a nation before, and there has been none since, with sufficient virtue to endure it. But the Roman morality was not lovely for its own sake, nor excellent in itself. It was obedience to law, practised and valued, loved

for what resulted from it, for the strength and rigid endurance which it gave, but not loved for itself. The Roman nature was fierce, rugged, almost brutal; and it submitted to restraint as stern as itself, as long as the energy of the old spirit endured. But as soon as that energy grew slack—when the religion was no longer believed, and taste, as it was called, came in, and there was no more danger to face, and the world was at their feet, all was swept away as before a whirlwind; there was no loveliness in virtue to make it desired, and the Rome of the Cæsars presents, in its later ages, a picture of enormous sensuality, of the coarsest animal desire, with means unlimited to gratify it. In Latin literature, as little as in the Greek, is there any sense of the beauty of purity. Moral essays on temperance we may find, and praise enough of the wise man whose passions and whose appetites are trained into obedience to reason. But this is no more than the philosophy of the old Roman life, which got itself expressed in words when men were tired of the reality. It involves no sense of sin. If sin could be indulged without weakening self-command, or without hurting other people, Roman philosophy would have nothing to say against it.

The Christians stepped far out beyond philosophy. Without speculating on the *why*, they felt that indulgence of animal passion did, in fact, pollute them, and so much the more, the more it was deliberate. Philosophy, gliding into Manicheism, divided the forces of the universe, giving the spirit to God, but declaring matter to be eternally and incurably evil; and looking forward to the time when the spirit should be emancipated from the body, as the beginning of, or as the return to, its proper existence; a man like Plotinus took no especial care what became the mean-

while of its evil tenement of flesh. If the body sinned, sin was its element; it could not do other than sin; purity of conduct could not make the body clean, and no amount of bodily indulgence could shed a taint upon the spirit—a very comfortable doctrine, and one which, under various disguises, has appeared a good many times on the earth. But Christianity, shaking all this off, would present the body to God as a pure and holy sacrifice, as so much of the material world conquered from the appetites and lusts, and from the devil whose abode they were. This was the meaning of the fastings and scourgings, the penances and night-watchings; it was this which sent St Anthony to the tombs and set Simeon on his pillar, to conquer the devil in the flesh, and keep themselves, if possible, undefiled by so much as one corrupt thought.

And they may have been absurd and extravagant. When the feeling is stronger than the judgment, men are very apt to be extravagant. If, in the recoil from Manicheism, they conceived that a body of a saint thus purified had contracted supernatural virtue and could work miracles, they had not sufficiently attended to the facts, and so far are not unexceptionable witnesses to them. Nevertheless they did their work, and in virtue of it we are raised to a higher stage—we are lifted forward a mighty step which we can never again retrace. Personal purity is not the whole for which we have to care: it is but one feature in the ideal character of man. The monks may have thought it was all, or more nearly all than it is; and therefore their lives may seem to us poor, mean, and emasculate. Yet it is with life as it is with science; generations of men have given themselves exclusively to single branches, which, when mastered, form but a little section in a cosmic philosophy; and in life, so slow is progress, it may take a

thousand years to make good a single step. Weary and tedious enough it seems when we cease to speak in large language, and remember the numbers of individual souls who have been at work at the process ; but who knows whereabouts we are in the duration of the race ? Is humanity crawling out of the cradle, or tottering into the grave ? Is it in nursery, in school-room, or in opening manhood ? Who knows ? It is enough for us to be sure of our steps when we have taken them, and thankfully to accept what has been done for us. Henceforth it is impossible for us to give our unmixed admiration to any character which moral shadows overhang. Henceforth we require, not greatness only, but goodness ; and not that goodness only which begins and ends in conduct correctly regulated, but that love of goodness, that keen pure feeling for it, which resides in a conscience as sensitive and susceptible as woman's modesty.

So much for what seems to us the philosophy of this matter. If we are right, it is no more than a first furrow in the crust of a soil which hitherto the historians have been contented to leave in its barrenness. If they are conscientious enough not to trifle with the facts, as they look back on them from the luxurious self-indulgence of modern Christianity, they either revile the superstition or pity the ignorance which made such large mistakes on the nature of religion—and, loud in their denunciations of priesthood and of lying wonders, they point their moral with pictures of the ambition of mediæval prelacy or the scandals of the annals of the Papacy. For the inner life of all those millions of immortal souls who were struggling, with such good or bad success as was given them, to carry Christ's cross along their journey through life, they set it by, pass it over, dismiss it out of history,

with some poor commonplace simper of sorrow or of scorn. It will not do. Mankind have not been so long on this planet altogether, that we can allow so large a chasm to be scooped out of their spiritual existence.

We intended to leave our readers with something lighter than all this in the shape of literary criticism, and a few specimens of the biographical style; in both of these we must now, however, be necessarily brief. Whoever is curious to study the lives of the saints in their originals, should rather go anywhere than to the Bollandists, and universally never read a late life when he can command an early one; for the genius in them is in the ratio of their antiquity, and, like river-water, is most pure nearest to the fountain. We are lucky in possessing several specimens of the mode of their growth in late and early lives of the same saints, and the process in all is similar. Out of the unnumbered lives of St Bride, three are left; out of the sixty-six of St Patrick, there are eight; the first of each belonging to the sixth century, the latest to the thirteenth. The earliest in each instance are in verse; they belong to a time when there was no one to write such things, and were popular in form and popular in their origin. The flow is easy, the style graceful and natural; but the step from poetry to prose is substantial as well as formal; the imagination is ossified, and we exchange the exuberance of legendary creativeness for the dogmatic record of fact without reality, and fiction without grace. The marvellous in the poetical lives is comparatively slight; the after-miracles being composed frequently out of a mistake of poets' metaphors for literal truth. There is often real, genial, human beauty in the old verse. The first two stanzas, for instance, of St Bride's Hymn are of high merit, as may, perhaps, be imperfectly seen in a translation:—

Bride the queen, she loved not the world ;
She floated on the waves of the world
As the sea-bird floats upon the billow.
Such sleep she slept as the mother sleeps
In the far land of her captivity,
Mourning for her child at home.

What a picture is there of the strangeness and yearning of the poor human soul in this earthly pilgrimage !

The poetical 'Life of St Patrick,' too, is full of fine, wild, natural imagery. The boy is described as a shepherd on the hills of Down, and there is a legend, well told, of the angel Victor coming to him, and leaving a gigantic foot-print on a rock from which he sprang back into heaven. The legend, of course, rose from some remarkable natural feature of the spot ; as it is first told, a shadowy unreality hangs over it, and it is doubtful whether it is more than a vision of the boy ; but in the later prose all is crystalline ; the story is drawn out, with a barren prolixity of detail, into a series of angelic visitations. And again, when Patrick is described, as the after-apostle, raising the dead Celts to life, the metaphor cannot be left in its natural force, and we have a long weary list of literal deaths and literal raisings. So in many ways the freshness and individuality was lost with time. The larger saints swallowed up the smaller and appropriated their exploits ; chasms were supplied by an ever-ready fancy ; and, like the stock of good works laid up for general use, there was a stock of miracles ever ready when any defect was to be supplied. So it was that, after the first impulse, the progressive life of a saint rolled on like a snowball down a mountain-side, gathering up into itself whatever lay in its path, fact or legend, appropriate or inappropriate—sometimes real jewels of genuine old tradition, sometimes the débris of the old

creeds and legends of heathenism ; and on, and on, till at length it reached the bottom, and was dashed in pieces on the Reformation.

One more illustration shall serve as evidence of what the really greatest, most vigorous, minds in the twelfth century could accept as possible or probable, which they could relate (on what evidence we do not know) as really ascertained facts. We remember something of St Anselm : both as a statesman and as a theologian, he was unquestionably among the ablest men of his time alive in Europe. Here is a story which Anselm tells of a certain Cornish St Kieran. The saint, with thirty of his companions, was preaching within the frontiers of a lawless Pagan prince ; and, disregarding all orders to be quiet or to leave the country, continued to agitate, to threaten, and to thunder even in the ears of the prince himself. Things took their natural course. Disobedience provoked punishment. A guard of soldiers was sent, and the saint and his little band were decapitated. The scene of the execution was a wood, and the heads and trunks were left lying there for the wolves and the wild birds.

But now a miracle, such as was once heard of before in the Church in the person of the holy Denis, was again wrought by Divine Providence to preserve the bodies of these saints from profanation. The trunk of Kieran rose from the ground, and selecting first his own head, and carrying it to a stream, and there carefully washing it, and afterwards performing the same sacred office for each of his companions, giving each body its own head, he dug graves for them and buried them, and last of all buried himself.

It is even so. So it stands written in a life claiming Anselm's authorship ; and there is no reason why the authorship should not be his. Out of the heart come the issues of evil and of good, and not out of the intellect or the understanding. Men are not good or bad,

noble or base—thank God for it!—as they judge well or ill of the probabilities of nature, but as they love God and hate the devil. And yet the story is instructive. We have heard grave good men—men of intellect and influence—with all the advantages of modern science, learning, experience; men who would regard Anselm with sad and serious pity; yet tell us stories, as having fallen within their own experience, of the marvels of mesmerism, to the full as ridiculous (if anything is ridiculous) as this of the poor decapitated Kieran.

*Mutato nomine, de te
Fabula narratur.*

We see our natural faces in the glass of history, and turn away and straightway forget what manner of men we are. The superstition of science scoffs at the superstition of faith.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

1850.

FROM St Anselm to Mr Emerson, from the 'Acta Sanctorum' to the 'Representative Men ;' so far in seven centuries we have travelled. The races of the old Ideals have become extinct like the Preadamite Saurians ; and here are our new pattern specimens on which we are to look, and take comfort and encouragement to ourselves.

The philosopher, the mystic, the poet, the sceptic, the man of the world, the writer ; these are the present moral categories, the *summa genera* of human greatness as Mr Emerson arranges them. From every point of view an exceptionable catalogue. They are all thinkers, to begin with, except one : and thought is but a poor business compared to action. Saints did not earn canonization by the number of their folios ; and if the necessities of the times are now driving our best men out of action into philosophy and verse-making, so much the worse for them and so much the worse for the world. The one pattern actor, 'the man of the world,' is Napoleon Bonaparte, not in the least a person, as we are most of us at present feeling, whose example the world desires to see followed. Mr Emerson would have done better if he had kept to his own side of the Atlantic. He is paying his own

countrymen but a poor compliment by coming exclusively to Europe for his heroes ; and he would be doing us in Europe more real good by a great deal if he would tell us something of the backwoodsmen in Kentucky and Ohio. However, to let that pass ; it is not our business here to quarrel either with him or his book ; and the book stands at the head of our article rather because it presents a very noticeable deficiency of which its writer is either unaware or careless.

These six predicables, as the logician would call them, what are they ? Are they *ultimate genera* refusing to be classified further ? or is there any other larger type of greatness under which they fall ? In the naturalist's catalogue, poet, sceptic, and the rest will all be classified as men—man being an intelligible entity. Has Mr Emerson any similar clear idea of great man or good man ? If so, where is he ? what is he ? It is desirable that we should know. Men will not get to heaven because they lie under one or other of these predicables. What is that supreme type of character which is in itself good or great, unqualified with any further *differentia* ? Is there any such ? and if there be, where is the representative of this ? It may be said that the generic man exists nowhere in an ideal unity—that if considered at all, he must be abstracted from the various sorts of men, black and white, tame or savage. So if we would know what a great man or a good man means, we must look to some specific line in which he is good, and abstract our general idea. And that is very well, provided we know what we are about ; provided we understand, in our abstracting, how to get the essential idea distinctly out before ourselves, without entangling ourselves in the accidents. Human excellence, after all the teach-

ing of the last eighteen hundred years, ought to be something palpable by this time. It is the one thing which we are all taught to seek and to aim at forming in ourselves ; and if representative men are good for anything at all, it can only be, not as they represent merely curious combinations of phenomena, but as they illustrate us in a completely realized form, what we are, every single one of us, equally interested in understanding. It is not the 'great man' as 'man of the world' that we care for, but the 'man of the world' as a 'great man'—which is a very different thing. Having to live in this world, how to live greatly here is the question for us ; not, how, being great, we can cast our greatness in a worldly mould. There may be endless successful 'men of the world' who are mean or little enough all the while ; and the Emersonian attitude will confuse success with greatness, or turn our ethics into a chaos of absurdity. So it is with everything which man undertakes and works in. Life has grown complicated ; and for one employment in old times there are a hundred now. But it is not *they* which are anything, but *we*. We are the end, they are but the means, the material—like the clay, or the marble, or the bronze, in which the sculptor carves his statue. The *form* is everything ; and what is the form ? From nursery to pulpit every teacher rings on the one note—be good, be noble, be men. What is goodness then ? and what is nobleness ? and where are the examples ? We do not say that there are none. God forbid ! That is not what we are meaning at all. If the earth had ceased to bear men pleasant in God's sight, it would have passed away like the cities in the plain. But who are they ? which are they ? how are we to know them ? They are our leaders in this life-campaign of ours. If we could see them, we would

follow them, and save ourselves many and many a fall, and many an enemy whom we could have avoided, if we had known of him. It cannot be that the thing is so simple, when names of highest reputation are wrangled over, and such poor counterfeits are mobbed with applauding followers. In art and science we can detect the charlatan, but in life we do not recognize him so readily—we do not recognize the charlatan, and we do not recognize the true man. Rajah Brooke is alternately a hero or a pirate ; and fifty of the best men among us are likely to have fifty opinions on the merits of Elizabeth or Cromwell.

But surely, men say, the thing is simple. The commandments are simple. It is not that people do not know, but that they will not act up to what they know. We hear a great deal of this in sermons, and elsewhere ; and of course, as everybody's experience will tell him, there is a great deal too much reason why we should hear of it. But there are two sorts of duty, positive and negative ; what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do. To the latter of these, conscience is pretty much awake ; but by cunningly concentrating its attention on one side of the matter, conscience has contrived to forget altogether that any other sort exists at all. ' Doing wrong ' is breaking a commandment which forbids us to do some particular thing. That is all the notion which in common language is attached to the idea. Do not kill, steal, lie, swear, commit adultery, or break the Lord's day—these are the commandments ; very simple, doubtless, and easy to be known. But, after all, what are they ? They are no more than the very first and rudimental conditions of goodness. Obedience to these is not more than a small part of what is required of us ; it is no more than the foundation on which the superstructure

of character is to be raised. To go through life, and plead at the end of it that we have not broken any of these commandments, is but what the unprofitable servant did, who kept his talent carefully unspent, and yet was sent to outer darkness for his uselessness. Suppose these commandments obeyed—what then? It is but a small portion of our time which, we will hope, is spent in resisting temptation to break them. What are we to do with the rest of it? Or suppose them (and this is a high step indeed) resolved into love of God and love of our neighbour. Suppose we know that it is our duty to love our neighbour as ourselves. What are we to do, then, for our neighbour, besides abstaining from doing him injury? The saints knew very well what *they* were to do; but our duties, we suppose, lie in a different direction; and it does not appear that we have found them. 'We have duties so positive to our neighbour,' says Bishop Butler, 'that if we give more of our time and of our attention to ourselves and our own matters than is our just due, we are taking what is not ours, and are guilty of fraud.' What does Bishop Butler mean? It is easy to answer generally. In detail, it is not only difficult, it is impossible to answer at all. The modern world says—'Mind your own business, and leave others to take care of theirs;' and whoever among us aspires to more than the negative abstaining from wrong, is left to his own guidance. There is no help for him, no instruction, no modern ideal which shall be to him what the heroes were to the young Greek or Roman, or the martyrs to the Middle-Age Christian. There is neither track nor footprint in the course which he will have to follow, while, as in the old fairy tale, the hill-side which he is climbing is strewed with black stones mocking at him with their thousand voices. We have no moral cri-

terion, no idea, no counsels of perfection ; and surely this is the reason why education is so little prosperous with us ; because the only education worth anything is the education of character, and we cannot educate a character unless we have some notion of what we would form. Young men, as we know, are more easily led than driven. It is a very old story that to forbid this and that (so curious and contradictory is our nature), is to stimulate a desire to do it. But place before a boy a figure of a noble man ; let the circumstances in which he has earned his claim to be called noble be such as the boy himself sees round himself ; let him see this man rising over his temptation, and following life victoriously and beautifully forward, and, depend on it, you will kindle his heart as no threat of punishment here or anywhere will kindle it.

People complain of the sameness in the 'Lives of the Saints.' It is that very sameness which is the secret of their excellence. There is a sameness in the heroes of the 'Iliad' ; there is a sameness in the historical heroes of Greece and Rome. A man is great as he contends best with the circumstances of his age, and those who fight best with the same circumstances, of course grow like each other. And so with our own age—if we really could have the lives of our best men written for us (and written well, by men who knew what to look for, and what it was on which they should insist), they would be just as like each other too, and would for that reason be of such infinite usefulness. They would not be like the old Ideals. Times are changed ; they were one thing, we have to be another —their enemies are not ours. There is a moral metempsychosis in the change of era, and probably no lineament of form or feature remains identical ; yet surely not because less is demanded of us—not less,

but more—more, as we are again and again told on Sundays from the pulpits; if the preachers would but tell us in what that 'more' consists. The loftiest teaching we ever hear is, that we are to work in the spirit of love; but we are still left to generalities, while action divides and divides into ever smaller details. It is as if the Church said to the painter or to the musician whom she was training, you must work in the spirit of love and in the spirit of truth; and then adding, that the Catholic painting or the Catholic music was what he was *not* to imitate, suppose that she had sent him out into the world equipped fully for his enterprise.

And what comes of this? Emersonianism has come, modern hagiology has come, and Ainsworth novels and Bulwer novels, and a thousand more unclean spirits. We have cast out the Catholic devil, and the Puritan has swept the house and garnished it; but as yet we do not see any symptoms showing of a healthy incoming tenant, and there may be worse states than Catholicism. If we wanted proof of the utter spiritual disintegration into which we have fallen, it would be enough that we have no biographies. We do not mean that we have no written lives of our fellow-creatures; there are enough and to spare. But not any one is there in which the ideal tendencies of this age can be discerned in their true form; not one, or hardly any one, which we could place in a young man's hands, with such warm confidence as would let us say of it—'Read that; there is a man—such a man as you ought to be; read it, meditate on it; see what he was, and how he made himself what he was, and try and be yourself like him.' This, as we saw lately, is what Catholicism did. It had its one broad type of perfection, which in countless thousands of instances was

perpetually reproducing itself—a type of character not especially belonging to any one profession ; it was a type to which priest or layman, knight or bishop, king or peasant, might equally aspire : men of all sorts aspired to it, and men of all sorts attained to it ; and as fast as she had realised them (so to say), the Church took them in her arms, and held them up before the world as fresh and fresh examples of victory over the devil. This is what that Church was able to do, and it is what we cannot do ; and yet, till we can learn to do it, no education which we can offer has any chance of prospering. Perfection is not easy ; it is of all things most difficult ; difficult to know and difficult to practise. Rules of life will not do ; even if our analysis of life in all its possible forms were as complete as it is in fact rudimentary, they would still be inefficient. The philosophy of the thing might be understood, but the practice would be as far off as ever. In life, as in art, and as in mechanics, the only profitable teaching is the teaching by example. Your mathematician, or your man of science, may discourse excellently on the steam engine, yet he cannot make one ; he cannot make a bolt or a screw. The master workman in the engine-room does not teach his apprentice the theory of expansion, or of atmospheric pressure ; he guides his hand upon the turncock, he practises his eye upon the index, and he leaves the science to follow when the practice has become mechanical. So it is with everything which man learns to do ; and yet for the art of arts, the trade of trades, for *life*, we content ourselves with teaching our children the catechism and the commandments ; we preach them sermons on the good of being good, and the evil of being evil ; in our higher education we advance to the theory of habit and the freedom of the will ; and

then, when failure follows failure, *ipsa experientia reclamante*, we hug ourselves with a complacent self-satisfied reflection that the fault is not ours, that all which men could do we have done. The freedom of the will!—as if a blacksmith would ever teach a boy to make a horseshoe, by telling him he could make one if he chose.

In setting out on our journey through life, we are like strangers set to find their way across a difficult and entangled country. It is not enough for us to know that others have set out as we set out, that others have faced the lions in the path and overcome them, and have arrived at last at the journey's end. Such a knowledge may give us heart—but the help it gives is nothing beyond teaching us that the difficulties are not insuperable. It is the *track*, which these others, these pioneers of godliness, have beaten in, that we cry to have shown us; not a mythic 'Pilgrim's Progress,' but a real path trodden in by real men. Here is a crag, and there is but one spot where it can be climbed; here is a morass or a river, and there is a bridge in one place, and a ford in another. There are robbers in this forest, and wild beasts in that; the tracks cross and recross, and, as in the old labyrinth, only one will bring us right. The age of the saints has passed; they are no longer any service to us; we must walk in their spirit, but not along their road; and in this sense we say, that we have no pattern great men, no biographies, no history, which are of real service to us. It is the remarkable characteristic of the present time, as far as we know—a new phenomenon since history began to be written; one more proof, if we wanted proof, that we are entering on another era. In our present efforts at educating, we are like workmen setting about to make a machine which they know is to be composed of

plates and joints, and wheels and screws and springs : —they temper their springs, and smooth their plates, and carve out carefully their wheels and screws, but having no idea of the machine in its combination, they either fasten them together at random, and create some monster of disjointed undirected force, or else pile the finished materials into a heap together, and trust to some organic spirit in themselves which will shape them into unity. We do not know what we would be at. Make our children into men, says one. But what sort of men ? The Greeks were men, so were the Jews, so were the Romans, so were the old Saxons, the Normans, the Duke of Alva's Spaniards, and Cromwell's Puritans. These were all men, and strong men too ; yet all different, and all differently trained. ' Into Christian men,' say others. But the saints were Christian men ; yet the modern Englishmen have been offered the saints' biographies, and have with sufficient clearness expressed their opinion of them.

Alas ! in all this confusion, only those keen-eyed children of this world find their profit ; their idea does not readily forsake them. In their substantial theory of life, the business of man in it is to get on, to thrive, to prosper, to have riches in possession. They will have their little ones taught, by the law of demand, what will fetch its price in the market ; and this is clear, bold, definite, straightforward—and therefore, it is strong, and works its way. It works and will prevail for a time ; for a time—but not for ever, unless indeed religion be all a dream, and our airy notions of ourselves a vision out of which our wise age is the long-waited-for awakening.

It would be a weary and odious business to follow out all the causes which have combined to bring us into our present state. Many of them lie deep down

in the roots of humanity, and many belong to that large system of moral causation which works through vast masses of mankind—which, impressing peculiar and necessary features on the eras as they succeed, leaves individuals but a limited margin within which they may determine what they will be. One cause, however, may be mentioned, which lies near the surface, and which for many reasons it may be advantageous to consider. At first thought it may seem superficial and captious; but we do not think it will at the second, and still less at the third.

Protestantism, and even Anglo-Protestantism, has not been without its great men. In their first fierce struggle for existence, these creeds gave birth to thousands whose names may command any rank in history. But alone of all forms of religion, past or present, and we will add (as we devoutly hope), to come (for in her present form, at least, the Church of England cannot long remain), Protestantism knows not what to do with her own offspring; she is unable to give them open and honourable recognition. Entangled in speculative theories of human depravity, of the worthlessness of the best which the best men can do, Protestantism is unable to say heartily of any one, 'Here is a good man to be loved and remembered with reverence.' There are no saints in the English Church. The English Church does not pretend to saints. Her children may live purely, holily, and beautifully, but her gratitude for them must be silent; she may not thank God for them—she may not hold them up before her congregation. They may or they may not have been really good, but she may not commit herself to attributing a substantial value to the actions of a nature so corrupt as that of man. Among Protestants, the Church of England is the worst, for she is not wholly Protest-

ant. In the utterness of the self-abnegation of the genuine Protestant there is something approaching the heroic. But she, ambitious of being Catholic as well as Protestant, like that old Church of evil memory which would be neither hot nor cold, will neither wholly abandon merit, nor wholly claim it; but halts on between two opinions, claiming and disclaiming, saying and in the next breath again unsaying. The Oxford student being asked for the doctrine of the Anglican Church on good works, knew the rocks and whirlpools among which an unwary answer might involve him, and steering midway between Scylla and Charybdis, replied, with laudable caution, 'a few of them would not do a man any harm.' It is scarcely a caricature of the prudence of the Articles. And so at last it has come to this with us. The soldier can raise a column to his successful general; the halls of the law courts are hung round with portraits of the ermine sages; Newton has his statue, and Harvey and Watt, in the academies of the sciences; and each young aspirant after fame, entering for the first time upon the calling which he has chosen, sees high excellency highly honoured; sees the high career, and sees its noble ending, marked out each step of it in golden letters. But the Church's aisles are desolate, and desolate they must remain. There is no statue for the Christian. The empty niches stare out like hollow eye-sockets from the walls. Good men live in the Church and die in her, whose story written out or told would be of inestimable benefit, but she may not write it. She may speak of goodness, but not of the good man; as she may speak of sin, but may not censure the sinner. Her position is critical; the Dissenters would lay hold of it. She may not do it, but she will do what she can. She cannot tolerate an image in-

deed, or a picture of her own raising ; she has no praise to utter at her children's graves, when their lives have witnessed to her teaching. But if others will bear the expense and will risk the sin, she will offer no objection. Her walls are naked. The wealthy ones among her congregation may adorn them as they please ; the splendour of a dead man's memorial shall be, not as his virtues were, but as his purse ; and his epitaph may be brilliant according as there are means to pay for it. They manage things better at the museums and the institutes.

Let this pass, however, as the worst case. There are other causes at work besides the neglect of Churches ; the neglect itself being as much a result as a cause. There is a common dead level over the world, to which Churches and teachers, however seemingly opposite, are alike condemned. As it is here in England, so it is with the American Emerson. The fault is not in them, but in the age of which they are no more than the indicators. We are passing out of old forms of activity into others new and on their present scale untried ; and how to work nobly in them is the one problem for us all. Surius will not profit us, nor the 'Mort d'Arthur.' Our calling is neither to the hermitage nor to the round table. Our work lies now in those peaceful occupations which, in ages called heroic, were thought unworthy of noble souls. In those it was the slave who tilled the ground, and wove the garments. It was the ignoble burgher who covered the sea with his ships, and raised up factories and workshops ; and how far such occupations influenced the character, how they could be made to minister to loftiness of heart, and high and beautiful life, was a question which could not occur while the atmosphere of the heroic was on all sides believed so alien to them.

Times have changed. The old hero-worship has vanished with the need of it; but no other has risen in its stead, and without it we wander in the dark. The commonplaces of morality, the negative commandments, general exhortations to goodness, while neither speaker nor hearer can tell what they mean by goodness—these are all which now remain to us; and thrown into a life more complicated than any which the earth has yet experienced, we are left to wind our way through the labyrinth of its details without any clue except our own instincts, our own knowledge, our own hopes and desires.

We complain of generalities; we will not leave ourselves exposed to the same charge. We will mention a few of the thousand instances in which we cry for guidance and find none; instances on which those who undertake to teach us ought to have made up their minds.

On the surface at least of the Prayer-book, there seems to be something left remaining of the Catholic penitential system. Fasting is spoken of, and abstinence, and some form or other of self-inflicted self-denial is necessarily meant. This thing can by no possibility be unimportant, and we may well smile at the exclusive claims of a Church to the cure of our souls, who is unable to say what she thinks about it. Let us ask her living interpreters then, and what shall we get for an answer? either no answer at all, or contradictory answers; angrily, violently, passionately contradictory. Among the many voices, what is a young man to conclude? He will conclude naturally according to his inclination; and if he chooses right, it will most likely be on a wrong motive.

Again, *courage* is, on all hands, considered as an essential of high character. Among all fine people,

old and modern, wherever we are able to get an insight into their training system, we find it a thing particularly attended to. The Greeks, the Romans, the old Persians, our own nation till the last two hundred years, whoever of mankind have turned out good for anything anywhere, knew very well, that to exhort a boy to be brave without training him in it, would be like exhorting a young colt to submit to the bridle without breaking him in. Step by step, as he could bear it, the boy was introduced to danger, till his pulse ceased to be agitated, and he became familiarized with peril as his natural element. It was a matter of carefully considered, thoroughly recognized, and organized education. But courage now-a-days is not a paying virtue. Courage does not help to make money, and so we have ceased to care about it; and boys are left to educate one another by their own semi-brutal instincts, in this, which is perhaps the most important of all features, in the human character. Schools, as far as the masters are concerned with them, are places for teaching Greek and Latin—that, and nothing more. At the universities, fox-hunting is, perhaps, the only discipline of the kind now to be found, and fox-hunting, by forbidding it and winking at it, the authorities have contrived to place on as demoralizing a footing as ingenuity could devise.¹

To pass from training to life. A boy has done with school and college; he has become a man, and has to choose his profession. It is the one most serious step which he has yet taken. In most cases, there is no recalling it. He believes that he is passing through life to eternity; that his chance of getting to heaven depends on what use he makes of his time; he prays every day that he may be delivered from

¹ Written 1850.

temptation ; it is his business to see that he does not throw himself into it. Now, every one of the many professions has a peculiar character of its own, which, with rare exceptions, it inflicts on those who follow it. There is the shopkeeper type, the manufacturer type, the lawyer type, the medical type, the clerical type, the soldier's, the sailor's. The nature of a man is 'like the dyer's hand, subdued to what it works in ;' and we can distinguish with ease, on the slightest intercourse, to what class a grown person belongs. It is to be seen in his look, in his words, in his tone of thought, his voice, gesture, even in his hand-writing ; and in everything which he does. Every human employment has its especial moral characteristic, its peculiar temptations, its peculiar influences—of a subtle and not easily analyzed kind, and only to be seen in their effects. Here, therefore,—here if anywhere, we want Mr Emerson with his representatives, or the Church with her advice and warning. But, in fact, what attempt do we see to understand any of this, or even to acknowledge it ; to master the moral side of the professions ; to teach young men entering them what they are to expect, what to avoid, or what to seek ? Where are the highest types—the pattern lawyer, and shopkeeper, and merchant ? Are they all equally favourable to excellence of character ? Do they offer equal opportunities ? Which best suits this disposition and which suits that ? Alas ! character is little thought of in the choice. It is rather, which shall I best succeed in ? Where shall I make most money ? Suppose an anxious boy to go for counsel to his spiritual mother ; to go to her, and ask her to guide him. Shall I be a soldier ? he says. What will she tell him ? This and no more—you may, without sin. Shall I be a lawyer, merchant,

manufacturer, tradesman, engineer? Still the same answer. But which is best? he demands. We do not know: we do not know. There is no guilt in either; you may take which you please, provided you go to church regularly, and are honest and good. If he is foolish enough to persist further, and ask, in what goodness and honesty consist in *his especial department* (whichever he selects), he will receive the same answer; in other words, he will be told to give every man his due and be left to find out for himself in what 'his due' consists. It is like an artist telling his pupil to put the lights and shadows in their due places, and leaving it to the pupil's ingenuity to interpret such instructive directions.

One more instance of an obviously practical kind. Masters, few people will now deny, owe certain duties to their workmen beyond payment at the competition price for their labour, and the workmen owe something to their masters beyond making their own best bargain. Courtesy, on the one side, and respect on the other, are at least due; and wherever human beings are brought in contact, a number of reciprocal obligations at once necessarily arise out of the conditions of their position. It is this question which at the present moment is convulsing an entire branch of English trade. It is this question which has shaken the Continent like an earthquake, and yet it is one which, the more it is thought about, the more clearly seems to refuse to admit of being dealt with by legislation. It is a question for the Gospel and not for the law. The duties are of the kind which it is the business, not of the State, but of the Church, to look to. Why is the Church silent? There are duties; let her examine them, sift them, prove them, and then point them out. Why not—why not? Alas! she cannot,

she dare not give offence, and therefore must find none. It is to be feared that we have a rough trial to pass through, before we find our way and understand our obligations. Yet far off we seem to see a time when the lives, the actions of the really great—great good masters, great good landlords, great good working men—will be laid out once more before their several orders, laid out in the name of God, as once the saints' lives were ; and the same sounds shall be heard in factory and in counting-house as once sounded through abbey, chapel, and cathedral aisle—‘ Look at these men ; bless God for them, and follow them.’

And let no one fear that, if such happy time were come, it would result in a tame and weary sameness ; that the beautiful variety of individual form would be lost, drilled away in regimental uniformity. Even if it were so, it need not be any the worse for us ; we are not told to develope our individualities, we are told to bear fruit. The poor vagabond with all his individualities about him, if by luck he falls into the hands of the recruiting sergeant, finds himself, a year later, with his red coat and his twelve months' training, not a little the better for the loss of them. But such schooling as we have been speaking of will drill out only such individualities as are of the unworthy kind, and will throw the strength of the nature into the development of the healthiest features in it. Far more, as things now are, we see men sinking into sameness—an inorganic, unwholesome sameness, in which the higher nature is subdued, and the *man* is sacrificed to the profession. The circumstances of his life are his world ; and he sinks under them, he does not conquer them. If he has to choose between the two, God's uniform is better than the world's.

The first gives him freedom ; the second takes it from him. Only here, as in everything, we must understand the nature of the element in which we work ; understand it ; understand the laws of it. Throw off the lower laws ; the selfish, debasing influences of the profession ; obey the higher ; follow love, truthfulness, manliness ; follow these first, and make the profession serve them ; and that is freedom ; there is none else possible for man.

Das Gesetz soll nur uns Freiheit geben ;

and whatever individuality is lost in the process, we may feel assured that the devil has too much to do with, to make us care to be rid of it.

But how to arrive at this ? so easy as it is to suggest on paper, so easy to foretell in words. Raise the level of public opinion, we might say ; insist on a higher standard ; in the economist's language, increase the demand for goodness, and the supply will follow ; or, at any rate, men will do their best. Until we require more of one another, more will not be provided. But this is but to restate the problem in other words. How are we to touch the heart ; how to awaken the desire ? We believe that the good man, the great man, whatever he be, prince or peasant, is really lovely ; that really and truly, if we can only see him, he more than anything will move us ; and at least, we have a right to demand that the artificial hindrances which prevent our lifting him above the crowd, shall be swept away. He in his beautiful life is a thousand times more God's witness than any preacher in a pulpit, and his light must not be concealed any more. As we said, what lies in the way of our sacred recognition of great men is more than anything else the Protestant doctrine of good works. We do not forget what it meant when the world

first heard of it. It was a cry from the very sanctuary of the soul, flinging off and execrating the accursed theory of merits, the sickening parade of redundant saintly virtues, which the Roman Church had converted into stock, and dispensed for the benefit of the believers. This is not the place to pour out our nausea on so poor, yet so detestable a farce. But it seems with all human matters that as soon as spiritual truths are petrified into doctrines, it is another name for their death. They die, corrupt, and breed a pestilence. The doctrine of good works was hurled away by an instinct of generous feeling, and this feeling itself has again become dead, and a fresh disease has followed upon it. Nobody (or, at least, nobody good for anything) will lay a claim to merit for this or that good action which he may have done. Exactly in proportion as a man is really good, will be the eagerness with which he will refuse all credit for it; he will cry out, with all his soul, 'Not unto us—not unto us.'

And yet, practically, we all know and feel that between man and man there is an infinite moral difference; one is good, one is bad, another hovers between the two; the whole of our conduct to each other is necessarily governed by a recognition of this fact, just as it is in the analogous question of the will. Ultimately, we are nothing of ourselves; we know that we are but what God has given us grace to be—we did not make ourselves—we do not keep ourselves here—we are but what in the eternal order of Providence we are designed to be—exactly that and nothing else; and yet we treat each other as responsible; we cannot help it. The most rigid Calvinist cannot eliminate his instincts; his loves and hatreds seem rather to deepen in intensity of colouring as, logically, his creed should lead him to conquer them as foolish. It is useless, it is impossible,

to bring down these celestial mysteries upon our earth, to try to see our way by them, or determine our feelings by them ; men are good, men are bad, relatively to us and to our understandings if you will, but still really, and so they must be treated.

There is no more mischievous falsehood than to persist in railing at man's nature, as if it were all vile together, as if the best and the worst which comes of it were in God's sight equally without worth. These denunciations tend too fatally to realize themselves. Tell a man that no good which he can do is of any value, and depend upon it he will take you at your word—most especially will the wealthy, comfortable, luxurious man, just the man who has most means to do good, and whom of all things it is most necessary to stimulate to it. Surely we should not be afraid. The instincts which God has placed in our hearts are too mighty for us to be able to extinguish them with doctrinal sophistry. We love the good man, we praise him, we admire him—we cannot help it ; and surely it is mere cowardice to shrink from recognizing it openly—thankfully, divinely recognizing it. If true at all, there is no truth in heaven or earth of deeper practical importance to us ; and Protestantism must have lapsed from its once generous spirit, if it persists in imposing a dogma of its own upon our hearts, the touch of which is fatal as the touch of a torpedo to any high or noble endeavours after excellence.

‘Drive out nature with a fork, she ever comes running back ;’ and while we leave out of consideration the reality, we are filling the chasm with inventions of our own. The only novels which are popular among us are those which picture the successful battles of modern men and women with modern life, which are imperfect shadows of those real battles which every reader has

seen in some form or other, or has longed to see in his own small sphere. It shows where the craving lies if we had but the courage to meet it ; why need we fall back on imagination to create what God has created ready for us ? In every department of human life, in the more and the less, there is always one man who is the best, and one type of man which is the best, living and working his silent way to heaven in the very middle of us. Let us find this type then—let us see what it is which makes such men the best, and raise up their excellences into an acknowledged and open standard, of which they themselves shall be the living witnesses. Is there a landlord who is spending his money, not on pineries and hothouses, but on schools, and wash-houses, and drains ; who is less intent on the magnificence of his own grand house, than in providing cottages for his people where decency is possible ; then let us not pass him by with a torpid wonder or a vanishing emotion of pleasure—rather let us seize him and raise him up upon a pinnacle, that other landlords may gaze upon him, if, perhaps, their hearts may prick them, and the world shall learn from what one man has done what they have a right to require that others shall do.

So it might be through the thousand channels of life. It should not be so difficult ; the machinery is ready, both to find your men and to use them. In theory, at least, every parish has its pastor, and the state of every soul is or ought to be known. We know not what turn things may take, or what silent changes are rushing on below us. Even while the present organization remains —but, alas ! no—it is no use to urge a Church bound hand and foot in State shackles to stretch its limbs in any wholesome activity. If the teachers of the people really were the wisest and best and noblest men among

us, this and a thousand other blessed things would follow from it; till then let us be content to work and pray, and lay our hand to the wheel wherever we can find a spoke to grasp. *Corruptio optimi est pessima*; the national Church as it ought to be is the soul and conscience of the body politic, but a man whose body has the direction of his conscience we do not commonly consider in the most hopeful moral condition.

REYNARD THE FOX.¹

LORD MACAULAY, in his Essay on Machiavelli, propounds a singular theory. Declining the various solutions which have been offered to explain how a man supposed to be so great could have lent his genius to the doctrine of 'the Prince,' he has advanced a hypothesis of his own, which may or may not be true, as an interpretation of Machiavelli's character, but which, as an exposition of a universal ethical theory, is as questionable as what it is brought forward to explain. We will not show Lord Macaulay the disrespect of supposing that he has attempted an elaborate piece of irony. It is possible that he may have been exercising his genius with a paradox, but the subject is not of the sort in which we can patiently permit such exercises. It is hard work with all of us to keep ourselves straight, even when we see the road with all plainness as it lies out before us ; and clever men must be good enough to find something else to amuse themselves with, instead of dusting our eyes with sophistry.

According to this conception of human nature, the basenesses and the excellences of mankind are no more than accidents of circumstance, the results of national feeling and national capabilities ; and cunning and

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*, 1852.

treachery, and lying, and such other 'natural defences of the weak against the strong,' are in themselves neither good nor bad, except as thinking makes them so. They are the virtues of a weak people, and they will be as much admired, and are as justly admirable ; they are to the full as compatible with the highest graces and most lofty features of the heart and intellect, as any of those opposite so-called heroisms which we are generally so unthinking as to allow to monopolize the name. Cunning is the only resource of the feeble ; and why may we not feel for victorious cunning as strong a sympathy as for the bold, downright, open bearing of the strong ? That there may be no mistake in the essayist's meaning, that he may drive the nail home into the English understanding, he takes an illustration which shall be familiar to all of us in the characters of Iago and Othello. To our northern thought, the free and noble nature of the Moor is wrecked through a single infirmity, by a fiend in the human form. To one of Machiavelli's Italians, Iago's keen-edged intellect would have appeared as admirable as Othello's daring appears to us, and Othello himself little better than a fool and a savage. It is but a change of scene, of climate, of the animal qualities of the frame, and evil has become good, and good has become evil. Now, our displeasure with Lord Macaulay is, not that he has advanced a novel and mischievous theory : it was elaborated long ago in the finely-tempered dialectics of the Schools of Rhetoric at Athens ; and so long as such a phenomenon as a cultivated rogue remains possible among mankind, it will reappear in all languages and under any number of philosophical disguises. Seldom, or never, however, has it appeared with so little attempt at disguise. It has been left for questionable poets and novelists to

idealize the rascal genus ; philosophers have escaped into the ambiguities of general propositions, and we do not remember elsewhere to have met with a serious ethical thinker deliberately laying two whole organic characters, with their vices and virtues in full life and bloom, side by side, asking himself which is best, and answering gravely that it is a matter of taste.

Lord Macaulay has been bolder than his predecessors ; he has shrunk from no conclusion, and has looked directly into the very heart of the matter ; he has struck, as we believe, the very lowest stone of our ethical convictions, and declared that the foundation quakes under it.

For, ultimately, how do we know that right is right, and wrong is wrong ? People in general accept it on authority ; but authority itself must repose on some ulterior basis ; and what is that ? Are we to say that in morals there is a system of primary axioms, out of which we develope our conclusions, and apply them, as they are needed, to life ? It does not appear so. The analogy of morals is rather with art than with geometry. The grace of heaven gives us good men, and gives us beautiful creations ; and, we perceiving by the instincts within ourselves that celestial presence in the objects on which we gaze, find out for ourselves the laws which make them what they are, not by comparing them with any antecedent theory, but by careful analysis of our own impressions, by asking ourselves what it is which we admire in them, and by calling that good, and calling that beautiful.

So, then, if admiration be the first fact—if the sense of it be the ultimate ground on which the after temple of morality, as a system, upraises itself—if we can be challenged here on our own ground, and fail to make it good, what we call the life of the soul becomes

a dream of a feeble enthusiast, and we moralists a mark for the sceptic's finger to point at with scorn.

Bold and ably-urged arguments against our own convictions, if they do not confuse us, will usually send us back over our ground to re-examine the strength of our positions: and if we are honest with ourselves, we shall very often find points of some uncertainty left unguarded, of which the show of the strength of our enemy will oblige us to see better to the defence. It was not without some shame, and much uneasiness, that, while we were ourselves engaged in this process, full of indignation with Lord Macaulay, we heard a clear voice ringing in our ear, 'Who art thou that judgest another?' and warning us of the presence in our own heart of a sympathy which we could not 'deny,' with the sadly questionable hero of the German epic, 'Reynard the Fox.' With our vulpine friend, we were on the edge of the very same abyss, if, indeed, we were not rolling in the depth of it. By what sophistry could we justify ourselves, if not by the very same which we had just been so eagerly condemning? And our conscience whispered to us that we had been swift to detect a fault in another, because it was the very fault to which, in our own heart of hearts, we had a latent leaning.

Was it so indeed, then? Was Reineke no better than Iago? Was the sole difference between them, that the *vates sacer* who had sung the exploits of Reineke loved the wicked rascal, and entangled us in loving him? It was a question to be asked. And yet we had faith enough in the straightforwardness of our own sympathies to feel sure that it must admit of some sort of answer. And, indeed, we rapidly found an answer satisfactory enough to give us time to breathe, in remembering that Reineke, with all his roguery, has

no malice in him. It is not in his nature to hate ; he could not do it if he tried. The characteristic of Iago is that deep motiveless malignity which rejoices in evil as its proper element—which loves evil as good men love virtue. In calculations on the character of the Moor, Iago despises Othello's unsuspicious trustingness as imbecility, while he hates him as a man because his nature is the perpetual opposite and perpetual reproach of his own. Now, Reineke would not have hurt a creature, not even Scharfenebbe, the crow's wife, when she came to peck his eyes out, if he had not been hungry ; and that *γαστρὸς ἀνάγκη*, that craving of the stomach, makes a difference quite infinite. It is true that, like Iago, Reineke rejoices in the exercise of his intellect : the sense of his power and the scientific employment of his time are a real delight to him ; but then, as we said, he does not love evil for its own sake ; he is only somewhat indifferent to it. If the other animals venture to take liberties with him, he will repay them in their own coin, and get his quiet laugh at them at the same time ; but the object generally for which he lives is the natural one of getting his bread for himself and his family ; and, as the great moralist says, 'It is better to be bad for something than for nothing.' Badness generally is undesirable ; but badness in its essence, which may be called heroic badness, is gratuitous.

But this first thought served merely to give us a momentary relief from our alarm, and we determined we would sift the matter to the bottom, and no more expose ourselves to be taken at such disadvantage. We went again to the poem, with our eyes open, and our moral sense as keenly awake as a genuine wish to understand our feelings could make it. We determined that we would really know what we did feel

and what we did not. We would not be lightly scared away from our friend, but neither would we any more allow our judgment to be talked down by that fluent tongue of his ; he should have justice from us, he and his biographer, as far as it lay with us to discern justice and to render it.

And really on this deliberate perusal it did seem little less than impossible that we could find any conceivable attribute illustrated in Reineke's proceedings which we could dare to enter in our catalogue of virtues, and not blush to read it there. What sin is there in the Decalogue in which he has not steeped himself to the lips ? To the lips, shall we say ? nay, over head and ears—rolling and rollicking in sin. Murder, and theft, and adultery ; sacrilege, perjury, lying—his very life is made of them. On he goes to the end, heaping crime on crime, and lie on lie, and at last when it seems that justice, which has been so long vainly halting after him, has him really in her iron grasp, there is a solemn appeal to heaven, a challenge, a battle ordeal, in which, by means we may not venture even to whisper, the villain prospers, and comes out glorious, victorious, amidst the applause of a gazing world. To crown it all, the poet tells us that under the disguise of the animal name and form the world of man is represented, and the true course of it ; and the idea of the book is, that we who read it may learn therein to discern between good and evil, and choose the first and avoid the last. It seemed beyond the power of sophistry to whitewash Reineke, and the interest which still continued to cling to him seemed too nearly to resemble the unwisdom of the multitude, with whom success is the one virtue, and failure the only crime.

It appeared, too, that although the animal disguises

were too transparent to endure a moment's reflection, yet that they were so gracefully worn that such moment's reflection was not to be come at without an effort. Our imagination following the costume, did imperceptibly betray our judgment; we admired the human intellect, the ever ready prompt sagacity and presence of mind. We delighted in the satire on the foolishnesses and greedinesses of our own fellow-creatures; but in our regard for the hero we forgot his humanity wherever it was his interest that we should forget it, and while we admired him as a man we judged him only as a fox. We doubt whether it would have been possible, if he had been described as an open acknowledged biped in coat and trousers, to have retained our regard for him. Something or other in us, either real rightmindedness, or humbug, or hypocrisy, would have obliged us to mix more censure with our liking than most of us do in the case as it stands. It may be that the dress of the fox throws us off our guard, and lets out a secret or two which we commonly conceal even from ourselves. When we have to pass an opinion upon bad people, who at the same time are clever and attractive, we say rather what we think that we ought to feel than what we feel in reality; while with Reineke, being but an animal, we forgot to make ourselves up, and for once our genuine tastes show themselves freely. Some degree of truth there undoubtedly is in this. But making all allowance for it—making all and over allowance for the trick which is passed upon our senses, there still remained a feeling unresolved. The poem was not solely the apotheosis of a rascal in whom we were betrayed into taking an interest; and it was not a satire merely on the world, and on the men whom the world delight to honour. There was still something

which really deserved to be liked in Reineke, and what it was we had as yet failed to discover.

'Two are better than one,' and we resolved in our difficulty to try what our friends might have to say about it. The appearance of the Würtemberg animals at the Exhibition came fortunately *apropos* to our assistance: a few years ago it was rare to find a person who had read the Fox Epic; and still more, of course, to find one whose judgment would be worth taking about it. But now the charming figures of Reineke himself, and the Lion King, and Isegrim, and Bruin, and Bellyn, and Hintze, and Grimbart, had set all the world asking who and what they were, and the story began to get itself known. The old editions, which had long slept unbound in reams upon the shelves, began to descend and clothe themselves in green and crimson. Mr Dickens sent a summary of it round the households of England. Everybody began to talk of Reineke; and now, at any rate, we said to ourselves, we shall see whether we are alone in our liking—whether others share in this strange sympathy, or whether it be some unique and monstrous moral obliquity in ourselves.

We set to work, therefore, with all earnestness, feeling our way first with fear and delicacy, as conscious of our own delinquency, to gather judgments which should be wiser than our own, and correct ourselves, if it proved that we required correction, with whatever severity might be necessary. The result of this labour of ours was not a little surprising. We found that women invariably, with that clear moral instinct of theirs, at once utterly reprobated and detested our poor Reynard; detested the hero and detested the bard who sang of him with so much sympathy; while men we found almost invariably feeling

just as we felt ourselves, only with this difference, that we saw no trace of uneasiness in them about the matter. It was no little comfort to us, moreover, to find that the exceptions were rather among the half-men, the would-be extremely good, but whose goodness was of that dead and passive kind which spoke to but a small elevation of thought or activity; while just in proportion as a man was strong, and real, and energetic, was his ability to see good in Reineke. It was really most strange: one near friend of ours—a man who, as far as we knew (and we knew him well), had never done a wrong thing—when we ventured to hint something about roguery, replied, 'You see, he was such a clever rogue, that he had a right.' Another, whom we pressed more closely with that treacherous cannibal feast at Malepartus, on the body of poor Lampe, said off-hand and with much impatience of such questioning, 'Such fellows were made to be eaten.' What could we do? It had come to this;—as in the exuberance of our pleasure with some dear child, no ordinary epithet will sometimes reach to express the vehemence of our affection, and borrowing language out of the opposites, we call him little rogue or little villain, so here, reversing the terms of the analogy, we bestow the fulness of our regard on Reineke because of that transcendently successful roguery.

When we asked our friends how they came to feel as they did, they had little to say. They were not persons who could be suspected of any latent disposition towards evil doing; and yet though it appeared as if they were falling under the description of those unhappy ones who, if they did not such things themselves, yet 'had pleasure in those who did them,' they did not care to justify themselves. The fact was so: *ἀρχὴ τὸ ὄτι*: it was a fact—what could we want

more? Some few attempted feebly to maintain that the book was a satire. But this only moved the difficulty a single step; for the fact of the sympathy remained unimpaired, and if it was a satire we were ourselves the objects of it. Others urged what we said above, that the story was only of poor animals that, according to Descartes, not only had no souls, but scarcely had even life in any original and sufficient sense, and therefore we need not trouble ourselves. But one of two alternatives it seemed we were bound to choose, either of which was fatal to the proposed escape. Either there was a man hiding under the fox's skin; or else, if real foxes have such brains as Reineke was furnished withal, no honest doubt could be entertained that some sort of conscience was not forgotten in the compounding of him, and he must be held answerable according to his knowledge.

What would Mr Carlyle say of it, we thought, with his might and right? 'The just thing in the long run is the strong thing.' But Reineke had a long run out and came in winner. Does he only 'seem to succeed?' Who does succeed, then, if he no more than seems? The vulpine intellect knows where the geese live, it is elsewhere said; but among Reineke's victims we do not remember one goose, in the literal sense of goose; and as to geese metaphorical, the whole visible world lies down complacently at his feet. Nor does Mr Carlyle's expressed language on this very poem serve any better to help us—nay, it seems as if he feels uneasy in the neighbourhood of so strong a rascal, so briefly he dismisses him. 'Worldly prudence is the only virtue which is certain of its reward.' Nay, but there is more in it than that: no worldly prudence would command the voices which have been given in to us for Reineke.

Three only possibilities lay now before us: either we should, on searching, find something solid in the Fox's doings to justify success; or else the just thing was not always the strong thing; or it might be, that such very semblance of success was itself the most miserable failure; that the wicked man who was struck down and foiled, and foiled again, till he unlearnt his wickedness, or till he was disabled from any more attempting it, was blessed in his disappointment; that to triumph in wickedness, and to continue in it and to prosper to the end, was the last, worst penalty inflicted by the Divine vengeance. "Iv' *ἀθάνατος γῆ* *ἀδικος ᾧ*—to go on with injustice through this world and through all eternity, uncleansed by any purgatorial fire, untaught by any untoward consequence to open his eyes and to see in its true accursed form the miserable demon to which he has sold himself—this, of all catastrophes which could befall an evil man, was the deepest, lowest, and most savouring of hell, which the purest of the Grecian moralists could reason out for himself,—under which third hypothesis many an uneasy misgiving would vanish away, and Mr Carlyle's broad aphorism might be accepted by us with thankfulness.

It appeared, therefore, at any rate, to have to come to this—that if we wanted a solution for our sphinx enigma, no *Œdipus* was likely to rise and find it for us; and that if we wanted help, we must take it for ourselves. This only we found, that if we sinned in our regard for the unworthy animal, we shared our sin with the largest number of our own sex. Comforted with the sense of good fellowship, we went boldly to work upon our consciousness; and the imperfect analysis which we succeeded in accomplishing, we here lay before you, whoever you may be, who have felt,

as we have felt, a regard which was a moral disturbance to you, and which you will be pleased if we enable you to justify—

*Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.*

Following the clue which was thrust into our hand by the marked difference of the feelings of men upon the subject from those of women, we were at once satisfied that Reineke's goodness, if he had any, must lay rather in the active than the passive department of life. The negative obedience to prohibitory precepts, under which women are bound as well as men, as was already too clear, we were obliged to surrender as hopeless. But it seemed as if, with respect to men, whose business is to do, and to labour, and to accomplish, this negative test was a seriously imperfect one; and it was quite as possible that a man who unhappily had broken many prohibitions might yet exhibit positive excellences, as that he might walk through life picking his way with the utmost assiduity, risking nothing and doing nothing, not committing a single sin, but keeping his talent carefully wrapt up in a napkin, and get sent, in the end, to outer darkness for his pains, as an unprofitable servant. And this appeared the more important to us, as it was very little dwelt upon by religious or moral teachers: at the end of six thousand years, the popular notion of virtue, as far as it could get itself expressed, had not risen beyond the mere abstinence from certain specific bad actions.

The king of the beasts forgives Reineke on account of the substantial services which at various times he has rendered. His counsel was always the wisest, his hand the promptest in cases of difficulty; and all that dexterity, and politeness, and courtesy, and exquisite culture had not been learnt without an effort, or with-

out conquering many undesirable tendencies in himself. Men are not born with any art in its perfection, and Reineke had made himself valuable by his own sagacity and exertion. Now, on the human stage, a man who has made himself valuable is certain to be valued. However we may pretend to estimate men according to the wrong things which they have done, or abstained from doing, we in fact follow the example of Nobel, the king of the beasts : we give them their places among us according to the serviceableness and capability which they display. We might mention not a few eminent public servants, whom the world delights to honour—ministers, statesmen, lawyers, men of science, artists, poets, soldiers, who, if they were tried by the negative test, would show but a poor figure ; yet their value is too real to be dispensed with ; and we tolerate unquestionable wrong to secure the services of eminent ability. The world really does this, and it always has really done it from the beginning of the human history ; and it is only indolence or cowardice which has left our ethical teaching halting so far behind the universal and necessary practice. Even questionable *prima donnas*, in virtue of their sweet voices, have their praises hymned in drawing-room and newspaper, and applause rolls over them, and gold and bouquets shower on them from lips and hands, which, except for those said voices, would treat them to a ruder reward. In real fact, we take our places in this world, not according to what we are not, but according to what we are. His Holiness Pope Clement, when his audience-room rang with furious outcries for justice on Benvenuto Cellini, who, as far as half-a-dozen murders could form a title, was as fair a candidate for the gallows as ever swung from that unlucky wood, replied, ‘All this is very well, gentlemen : these murders are bad things, we know

that. But where am I to get another Benvenuto if you hang this one for me ?'

Or, to take an acknowledged hero, one of the old Greek sort, the theme of the song of the greatest of human poets, whom it is less easy to refuse to admire than even our friend Reineke. Take Ulysses. It cannot be said that he kept his hands from taking what was not his, or his tongue from speaking what was not true ; and if Frau Ermelyn had to complain (as indeed there was too much reason for her complaining) of certain infirmities in her good husband Reineke, Penelope, too, might have urged a thing or two, if she had known as much about the matter as we know, which the modern moralist would find it hard to excuse.

After all is said, the capable man is the man to be admired. The man who tries and fails, what is the use of him ? We are in this world to do something—not to fail in doing it. Of your bunglers—helpless, inefficient persons, 'unfit alike for good or ill,' who try one thing, and fail because they are not strong enough, and another, because they have not energy enough, and a third, because they have no talent—inconsistent, unstable, and therefore never to excel, what shall we say of them ? what use is there in them ? what hope is there of them ? what can we wish for them ? *τὸ μῆτον εἶναι πάντ' ἀριστον.* It were better for them they had never been born. To be able to do what a man tries to do, that is the first requisite ; and given that, we may hope all things for him. ' Hell is paved with good intentions,' the proverb says ; and the enormous proportion of bad successes in this life lie between the desire and the execution. Give us a man who is able to do what he settles that he desires to do, and we have the one thing indispensable. If he can succeed doing ill, much more he can succeed doing well. Show him

better, and, at any rate, there is a chance that he will do better.

We are not concerned here with Benvenuto or with Ulysses further than to show, through the position which we all consent to give them, that there is much unreality in our common moral talk, against which we must be on our guard. And if we fling off an old friend, and take to affecting a hatred of him which we do not feel, we have scarcely gained by the exchange, even though originally our friendship may have been misplaced.

Capability no one will deny to Reineke. That is the very *differentia* of him. An 'animal capable' would be his sufficient definition. Here is another very genuinely valuable feature about him — his wonderful singleness of character. Lying, treacherous, cunning scoundrel as he is, there is a wholesome absence of humbug about him. Cheating all the world, he never cheats himself; and while he is a hypocrite, he is always a conscious hypocrite — a form of character, however paradoxical it may seem, a great deal more accessible to good influences than the other of the unconscious sort. Ask Reineke for the principles of his life, and if it suited his purpose to tell you, he could do so with the greatest exactness. There would be no discrepancy between the profession and the practice. He is most truly single-minded, and therefore stable in his ways, and therefore, as the world goes, and in the world's sense, successful. Whether really successful is a question we do not care here to enter on; but only to say this — that of all unsuccessful men in every sense, either divine, or human, or devilish, there is none equal to Bunyan's Mr Facing-both-ways — the fellow with one eye on heaven and one on earth — who sincerely preaches one thing, and sincerely does an-

other ; and from the intensity of his unreality is unable either to see or feel the contradiction. Serving God with his lips, and with the half of his mind which is not bound up in the world, and serving the devil with his actions, and with the other half, he is substantially trying to cheat both God and the devil, and is, in fact, only cheating himself and his neighbours. This, of all characters upon the earth, appears to us to be the one of whom there is no hope at all—a character becoming, in these days, alarmingly abundant ; and the abundance of which makes us find even in a Reineke an inexpressible relief.

But what we most thoroughly value in him is his capacity. He can do what he sets to work to do. That blind instinct with which the world shouts and claps its hand for the successful man, is one of those latent impulses in us which are truer than we know ; it is the universal confessional to which Nature leads us, and, in her intolerance of disguise and hypocrisy, compels us to be our own accusers. Whoever can succeed in a given condition of society, can succeed only in virtue of fulfilling the terms which society exacts of him ; and if he can fulfil them triumphantly, of course it rewards him and praises him. He is what the rest of the world would be, if their powers were equal to their desires. He has accomplished what they all are vaguely, and with imperfect consistency, struggling to accomplish ; and the character of the conqueror—the means and appliances by which he has climbed up that great pinnacle on which he stands victorious, the observed of all observers, is no more than a very exact indicator of the amount of real virtue in the age, out of which he stands prominent.

We are forced to acknowledge that it was not a very virtuous age in which Reineke made himself a great

man ; but that was the fault of the age as much as the fault of him. His nature is to succeed wherever he is. If the age had required something else of him, then he would have been something else. Whatever it had said to him, 'Do, and I will make you my hero,' that Reineke would have done. No appetite makes a slave of him—no faculty refuses obedience to his will. His entire nature is under perfect organic control to the one supreme authority. And the one object for which he lives, and for which, let his lot have been cast in whatever century it might, he would always have lived, is to rise, to thrive, to prosper, and become great.

The world as he found it said to him—Prey upon us ; we are your oyster, let your wit open us. If you will only do it cleverly—if you will take care that we shall not close upon your fingers in the process, you may devour us at your pleasure, and we shall feel ourselves highly honoured. Can we wonder at a fox of Reineke's abilities taking such a world at its word ?

And let it not be supposed that society in this earth of ours is ever so viciously put together, is ever so totally without organic life, that a rogue, unredeemed by any merit, can prosper in it. There is no strength in rottenness ; and when it comes to that, society dies and falls in pieces. Success, as it is called, even worldly success, is impossible, without some exercise of what is called moral virtue, without some portion of it, infinitesimally small, perhaps, but still some. Courage, for instance, steady self-confidence, self-trust, self-reliance—that only basis and foundation-stone on which a strong character can rear itself—do we not see this in Reineke ? While he lives, he lives for himself ; but if he comes to dying, he can die like his betters ; and his wit is not of that effervescent sort which will fly away at the sight of death and leave him panic-stricken. It is true there

is a meaning to that word courage, which was perhaps not to be found in the dictionary in which Reineke studied. 'I hope I am afraid of nothing, Trim,' said my uncle Toby, 'except doing a wrong thing.' With Reineke there was no 'except.' His digestive powers shrank from no action, good or bad, which would serve his turn. Yet it required no slight measure of courage to treat his fellow-creatures with the steady disrespect with which Reineke treats them. To walk along among them, regardless of any interest but his own ; out of mere wantonness to hook them up like so many cock-chafers, and spin them for his pleasure ; not like Domitian, with an imperial army to hold them down during the operation, but with no other assistance but his own little body and large wit ; it was something to venture upon. And a world which would submit to be so treated, what could he do but despise ?

To the animals utterly below ourselves, external to our own species, we hold ourselves bound by no law. We say to them, *vos non vobis*, without any uneasy misgivings. We rob the bees of their honey, the cattle of their lives, the horse and the ass of their liberty. We kill the wild animals that they may not interfere with our pleasures ; and acknowledge ourselves bound to them by no terms except what are dictated by our own convenience. And why should Reineke have acknowledged an obligation any more than we, to creatures so utterly below himself ? He was so clever, as our friend said, that he had a right. That he *could* treat them so, Mr Carlyle would say, proves that he had a right.

But it is a mistake to say he is without a conscience. No bold creature is ever totally without one. Even Iago shows some sort of conscience. Respecting nothing else in heaven or earth, he respects and even reverences his own intellect. After one of those sweet

interviews with Roderigo, his, what we must call conscience, takes him to account for his company; and he pleads to it in his own justification—

For I mine own gained knowledge should *profane*
Were I to waste myself with such a *shipe*
But for my sport and profit.

Reineke, if we take the mass of his misdeeds, preyed chiefly, like our own Robin Hood, on rogues who were greater rogues than himself. If Bruin chose to steal Rusteviel's honey, if Hintze trespassed in the priest's granary, they were but taken in their own evil-doings. And what is Isegrim, the worst of Reineke's victims, but a great heavy, stupid, lawless brute?—fair type, we will suppose, of not a few *Front-de-Boeufs* and other so-called nobles of the poet's era, whose will to do mischief was happily limited by their obtuseness. We remember that French baron—*Gilbert de Retz*, we believe, was his name—who, like Isegrim, had studied at the universities, and passed for learned, whose after-dinner pastime for many years, as it proved at last, was to cut children's throats for the pleasure of watching them die. We may well feel gratitude that a Reineke was provided to be the scourge of such monsters as these; and we have a thorough pure, exuberant satisfaction in seeing the intellect in that little weak body triumph over them and trample them down. This, indeed, this victory of intellect over brute force, is one great secret of our pleasure in the poem, and goes far, in the Carlyle direction, to satisfy us that, at any rate, it is not given to mere base physical strength to win in the battle of life, even in times when physical strength is apparently the only recognized power.

We are insensibly falling from our self-assumed judicial office into that of advocacy; and sliding into what may be plausibly urged, rather than standing fast

on what we can surely affirm. Yet there are cases when it is fitting for the judge to become the advocate of an undefended prisoner; and advocacy is only plausible when a few words of truth are mixed with what we say, like the few drops of wine which colour and faintly flavour the large draught of water. Such few grains or drops, whatever they may be, we must leave to the kindness of Reynard's friends to distil for him, while we continue a little longer in the same strain.

After all, it may be said, what is it in man's nature which is really admirable? It is idle for us to waste our labour in passing Reineke through the moral crucible unless we shall recognize the results when we obtain them; and in these moral sciences our analytical tests can only be obtained by a study of our own internal experience. If we desire to know what we admire in Reineke, we must look for what we admire in ourselves. And what is that? Is it what on Sundays, and on set occasions, and when we are mounted on our moral stilts, we are pleased to call goodness, probity, obedience, humility? Is it? Is it really? Is it not rather the face and form which nature made—the strength which is ours, we know not how—our talents, our rank, our possessions? It appears to us that we most value in ourselves and most admire in our neighbour, not acquisitions, but *gifts*. A man does not praise himself for being good. If he praise himself he is not good. The first condition of goodness is forgetfulness of self; and where self has entered, under however plausible a form, the health is but skin-deep, and underneath there is corruption. And so through everything; we value, we are vain of, proud of, or whatever you please to call it, not what we have done for ourselves, but what has

been done for us—what has been given to us by the upper powers. We look up to high-born men, to wealthy men, to fortunate men, to clever men. Is it not so? Whom do we choose for the county member, the magistrate, the officer, the minister? The good man we leave to the humble enjoyment of his goodness, and we look out for the able, or the wealthy. And again of the wealthy, as if on every side to witness to the same universal law, the man who with no labour of his own has inherited a fortune, ranks higher in the world's esteem than his father who made it. We take rank by descent. Such of us as have the longest pedigree, and are therefore the farthest removed from the first who made the fortune and founded the family, we are the noblest. The nearer to the fountain the fouler the stream; and that first ancestor, who has soiled his fingers by labour, is no better than a parvenu.

And as it is with what we value, so it is with what we blame. It is an old story, that there is no one who would not in his heart prefer being a knave to being a fool; and when we fail in a piece of attempted roguery, as Coleridge has wisely observed, though reasoning unwisely from it, we lay the blame, not on our own moral nature, for which we are responsible, but on our intellectual, for which we are not responsible. We do not say what knaves, we say what fools, we have been; perplexing Coleridge, who regards it as a phenomenon of some deep moral disorder; whereas it is but one more evidence of the universal fact that *gifts* are the true and proper object of appreciation; and as we admire men for possessing gifts, so we blame them for their absence. The noble man is the gifted man; the ignoble is the ungifted; and therefore we have only to state a simple law in simple language to have a full solution of the enigma of Reineke. He

has gifts enough; of that, at least, there can be no doubt; and if he lacks the gift to use them in the way which we call good, at least he uses them successfully. His victims are less gifted than he, and therefore less noble; and therefore he has a right to use them as he pleases.

And after all, what are these victims? Among the heaviest charges which were urged against him was the killing and eating of that wretched Scharfenebbe—Sharpbeak—the crow's wife. It is well that there are two sides to every story. A poor weary fox, it seemed, was not to be allowed to enjoy a quiet sleep in the sunshine but what an unclean carrion bird must come down and take a peck at him. We can feel no sympathy with the outcries of the crow husband over the fate of the unfortunate Sharpbeak. Wofully, he says, he flew over the place where, a few moments before, in the glory of glossy plumage, a loving wife sat croaking out her passion for him, and found nothing—nothing but a little blood and a few torn feathers—all else clean gone and utterly abolished. Well, and if it was so, it was a blank prospect for him, but the earth was well rid of her; and for herself, it was a higher fate to be assimilated into the body of Reineke than to remain in a miserable individuality to be a layer of carrion crow's eggs.

And then for Bellyn, and for Bruin, and for Hintze, and the rest, who would needs be meddling with what was no concern of theirs—what is there in them to challenge either regret or pity? They made love to their occupation.

"Tis dangerous when the baser nature falls
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites:
They lie not near our conscience.

Ah ! if they were all. But there is one misdeed, one which outweighs all others whatsoever—a crime which it is useless to palliate, let our other friend say what he pleased ; and Reineke himself felt it so. It sat heavy, *for him*, on his soul, and alone of all the actions of his life we are certain that he wished it undone—the death and eating of that poor foolish Lampe, the hare. It was a paltry revenge in Reineke. Lampe had told tales of him ; he had complained that Reineke, under pretence of teaching him his Catechism, had seized him and tried to murder him ; and though he provoked his fate by thrusting himself, after such a warning, into the jaws of Malepartus, Reineke betrays an uneasiness about it in confession ; and, unlike himself, feels it necessary to make some sort of an excuse.

Grimbart, the badger, Reineke's father confessor, had been obliged to speak severely of the seriousness of the offence. ' You see,' Reineke answers :—

To help oneself out through the world is a queer sort of business :
one can not

Keep, you know, quite altogether as pure as one can in the cloister.
When we are handling honey we now and then lick at our fingers.
Lampe sorely provoked me ; he frisked about this way and that
way,

Up and down, under my eyes, and he looked so fat and so jolly,
Really I could not resist it. I entirely forgot how I loved him.
And then he was so stupid.

But even this acknowledgment does not satisfy Reineke. His mind is evidently softened, and it was on that occasion that he poured out his pathetic lamentation over the sad condition of the world—so fluent, so musical, so touching, that Grimbart listened with wide eyes, unable, till it had run to the length of a sermon, to collect himself. It is true that at last his office as ghostly father obliged him to put in a slight demurrer :—

Uncle, the badger replied, why, these are the sins of your neighbours ; Yours, I should think, were sufficient, and rather more now to the purpose.

But he sighs to think what a bishop Reineke would have made.

And now, for the present, farewell to Reineke Fuchs, and to the song in which his glory is enshrined, the Welt-Bibel—Bible of this world—as Goethe called it, the most exquisite moral satire, as we will call it, which has ever been composed. It is not addressed to a passing mode of folly or of profligacy, but it touches the perennial nature of mankind, laying bare our own sympathies, and tastes, and weaknesses, with as keen and true an edge as when the living world of the old Swabian poet winced under its earliest utterance.

Humorous in the high pure sense, every laugh which it gives may have its echo in a sigh, or may glide into it as excitement subsides into thought ; and yet, for those who do not care to find matter there either for thought or sadness, may remain innocently as a laugh.

Too strong for railing, too kindly and loving for the bitterness of irony, the poem is, as the world itself, a book where each man will find what his nature enables him to see, which gives us back each our own image, and teaches us each the lesson which each of us desires to learn.

THE CAT'S PILGRIMAGE.

1850.

PART I.

'It is all very fine,' said the Cat, yawning, and stretching herself against the fender, 'but it is rather a bore ; I don't see the use of it.' She raised herself, and arranging her tail into a ring, and seating herself in the middle of it, with her fore paws in a straight line from her shoulders, at right angles to the hearth-rug, she looked pensively at the fire. 'It is very odd,' she went on, 'there is my poor Tom ; he is gone. I saw him stretched out in the yard. I spoke to him, and he took no notice of me. He won't, I suppose, ever any more, for they put him under the earth. Nice fellow he was. It is wonderful how little one cares about it. So many jolly evenings we spent together ; and now I seem to get on quite as well without him. I wonder what has become of him ; and my last children, too, what has become of them ? What are we here for ? I would ask the men, only they are so conceited and stupid they can't understand what we say. I hear them droning away, teaching their little ones every day ; telling them to be good, and to do what they are bid, and all that. Nobody ever tells me to do anything ; if they do I don't do it, and I am

very good. I wonder whether I should be any better if I minded more. I'll ask the Dog.'

'Dog,' said she, to a little fat spaniel coiled up on a mat, like a lady's muff with a head and tail stuck on to it, 'Dog, what do you make of it all?'

The Dog faintly opened his languid eyes, looked sleepily at the Cat for a moment, and dropped them again.

'Dog,' she said, 'I want to talk to you; don't go to sleep. Can't you answer a civil question?'

'Don't bother me,' said the Dog, 'I am tired. I stood on my hind legs ten minutes this morning before I could get my breakfast, and it hasn't agreed with me.'

'Who told you to do it?' said the Cat.

'Why, the lady I have to take care of me,' replied the Dog.

'Do you feel any better for it, Dog, after you have been standing on your legs?' asked she.

'Hav'n't I told you, you stupid Cat, that it hasn't agreed with me? let me go to sleep and don't plague me.'

'But I mean,' persisted the Cat, 'do you feel improved, as the men call it? They tell their children that if they do what they are told they will improve, and grow good and great. Do you feel good and great?'

'What do I know?' said the Dog. 'I eat my breakfast and am happy. Let me alone.'

'Do you never think, O Dog without a soul! Do you never wonder what dogs are, and what this world is?'

The Dog stretched himself, and rolled his eyes lazily round the room. 'I conceive,' he said, 'that the world is for dogs, and men and women are put into it to take care of dogs; women to take care of little dogs

like me, and men for the big dogs like those in the yard—and cats,' he continued, 'are to know their place, and not to be troublesome.'

'They beat you sometimes,' said the Cat. 'Why do they do that? They never beat me.'

'If they forget their places, and beat me,' snarled the Dog, 'I bite them, and they don't do it again. I should like to bite you, too, you nasty Cat; you have woke me up.'

'There may be truth in what you say,' said the Cat, calmly; 'but I think your view is limited. If you listened like me you would hear the men say it was all made for them, and you and I were made to amuse them.'

'They don't dare to say so?' said the Dog.

'They do, indeed,' said the Cat. 'I hear many things which you lose by sleeping so much. They think I am asleep, and so they are not afraid to talk before me; but my ears are open when my eyes are shut.'

'You surprise me,' said the Dog. 'I never listen to them, except when I take notice of them, and then they never talk of anything except of me.'

'I could tell you a thing or two about yourself which you don't know,' said the Cat. 'You have never heard, I dare say, that once upon a time your fathers lived in a temple, and that people prayed to them?'

'Prayed! what is that?'

'Why, they went on their knees to you to ask you to give them good things, just as you stand on your toes to them now to ask for your breakfast. You don't know either that you have got one of those bright things we see up in the air at night called after you?'

'Well, it is just what I said,' answered the Dog.

'I told you it was all made for us. They never did anything of that sort for you.'

'Didn't they? Why, there was a whole city where the people did nothing else, and as soon as we got stiff and couldn't move about any more, instead of being put under the ground like poor Tom, we used to be stuffed full of all sorts of nice things, and kept better than we were when we were alive.'

'You are a very wise Cat,' answered her companion, 'but what good is it knowing all this?'

'Why, don't you see,' said she, 'they don't do it any more. We are going down in the world, we are, and that is why living on in this way is such an unsatisfactory sort of thing. I don't mean to complain for myself, and you needn't, Dog; we have a quiet life of it; but a quiet life is not the thing, and if there is nothing to be done except sleep and eat, and eat and sleep, why, as I said before, I don't see the use of it. There is something more in it than that; there was once, and there will be again, and I sha'n't be happy till I find it out. It is a shame, Dog, I say. The men have been here only a few thousand years, and we—why, we have been here hundreds of thousands: if we are older, we ought to be wiser. I'll go and ask the creatures in the wood.'

'You'll learn more from the men,' said the Dog.

'They are stupid, and they don't know what I say to them; besides, they are so conceited they care for nothing except themselves. No, I shall try what I can do in the woods. I'd as soon go after poor Tom as stay living any longer like this.'

'And where is poor Tom?' yawned the Dog.

'That is just one of the things I want to know,' answered she. 'Poor Tom is lying under the yard, or the skin of him, but whether that is the whole I don't

feel so sure. They didn't think so in the city I told you about. It is a beautiful day, Dog ; you won't take a trot out with me ?' she added wistfully.

'Who ? I ?' said the Dog. 'Not quite.'

'You may get so wise,' said she.

'Wisdom is good,' said the Dog ; 'but so is the hearth-rug, thank you !'

'But you may be free,' said she.

'I shall have to hunt for my own dinner,' said he.

'But, Dog, they may pray to you again,' said she.

'But I sha'n't have a softer mat to sleep upon, Cat, and as I am rather delicate, that is a consideration.'

PART II.

So the Dog wouldn't go, and the Cat set off by herself to learn how to be happy, and to be all that a Cat could be. It was a fine sunny morning. She determined to try the meadow first, and, after an hour or two, if she had not succeeded, then to go off to the wood. A blackbird was piping away on a thornbush as if his heart was running over with happiness. The Cat had breakfasted, and so was able to listen without any mixture of feeling. She didn't sneak. She walked boldly up under the bush, and the bird, seeing she had no bad purpose, sat still and sung on.

'Good morning, Blackbird ; you seem to be enjoying yourself this fine day.'

'Good morning, Cat.'

'Blackbird, it is an odd question, perhaps. What ought one to do to be as happy as you ?'

'Do your duty, Cat.'

'But what is my duty, Blackbird ?'

'Take care of your little ones, Cat.'

'I hav'n't any,' said she.

'Then sing to your mate,' said the bird.

'Tom is dead,' said she.

'Poor Cat!' said the bird. 'Then sing over his grave. If your song is sad, you will find your heart grow lighte for it.'

'Mercy!' thought the Cat. 'I could do a little singing with a living lover, but I never heard of singing for a dead one. But you see, bird, it isn't cats' nature. When I am cross, I mew. When I am pleased, I purr; but I must be pleased first. I can't purr myself into happiness.'

'I am afraid there is something the matter with your heart, my Cat. It wants warming; good-bye.'

The Blackbird flew away. The Cat looked sadly after him. 'He thinks I am like him; and he doesn't know that a cat is a cat,' said she. 'As it happens, now, I feel a great deal for a cat. If I hadn't got a heart I shouldn't be unhappy. I won't be angry. I'll try that great fat fellow.'

The Ox lay placidly chewing, with content beaming out of his eyes and playing on his mouth.

'Ox,' she said, 'what is the way to be happy?'

'Do your duty,' said the Ox.

'Bother,' said the Cat, 'duty again! What is it, Ox?'

'Get your dinner,' said the Ox.

'But it is got for me, Ox; and I have nothing to do but to eat it.'

'Well, eat it, then, like me.'

'So I do; but I am not happy for all that.'

'Then you are a very wicked, ungrateful Cat.'

The Ox munched away. A Bee buzzed into a buttercup under the Cat's nose.

'I beg your pardon,' said the Cat, 'it isn't curiosity —what are you doing?'

'Doing my duty ; don't stop me, Cat.'

'But, Bee, what is your duty ?'

'Making honey,' said the Bee.

'I wish I could make honey,' sighed the Cat.

'Do you mean to say you can't ?' said the Bee.

'How stupid you must be. What do you do, then ?'

'I do nothing, Bee. I can't get anything to do.'

'You won't get anything to do, you mean, you lazy Cat ! You are a good-for-nothing drone. Do you know what we do to our drones ? We kill them ; and that is all they are fit for. Good morning to you.'

'Well, I am sure,' said the Cat, 'they are treating me civilly ! I had better have stopped at home at this rate. Stroke my whiskers ! heartless ! wicked ! good-for-nothing ! stupid ! and only fit to be killed ! This is a pleasant beginning, anyhow. I must look for some wiser creatures than these are. What shall I do ? I know. I know where I will go.'

It was in the middle of the wood. The bush was very dark, but she found him by his wonderful eye. Presently, as she got used to the light, she distinguished a sloping roll of feathers, a rounded breast, surmounted by a round head, set close to the body, without an inch of a neck intervening. 'How wise he looks !' she said ; 'what a brain ; what a forehead ! His head is not long, but what an expanse ! and what a depth of earnestness !' The Owl sloped his head a little on one side ; the Cat slanted hers upon the other. The Owl set it straight again, the Cat did the same. They stood looking in this way for some minutes ; at last, in a whispering voice, the Owl said, 'What are you, who presume to look into my repose ? Pass on upon your way, and carry elsewhere those prying eyes.'

'O wonderful Owl,' said the Cat, 'you are wise, and I want to be wise ; and I am come to you to teach me.'

A film floated backwards and forwards over the Owl's eyes; it was his way of showing that he was pleased.

'I have heard in our schoolroom,' went on the Cat, 'that you sat on the shoulder of Pallas, and she told you all about it.'

'And what would you know, O my daughter?' said the Owl.

'Everything,' said the Cat, 'everything. First of all, how to be happy.'

'Mice content you not, my child, even as they content not me,' said the Owl. 'It is good.'

'Mice indeed!' said the Cat; 'no, Parlour Cats don't eat mice. I have better than mice, and no trouble to get it; but I want something more.'

'The body's meat is provided. You would now fill your soul?'

'I want to improve,' said the Cat. 'I want something to do. I want to find out what the creatures call my duty.'

'You would learn how to employ those happy hours of your leisure?—rather, how to make them happy by a worthy use? Meditate, O Cat! meditate! meditate!'

'That is the very thing,' said she. 'Meditate! that is what I like above all things. Only I want to know how: I want something to meditate about. Tell me, Owl, and I will bless you every hour of the day as I sit by the parlour fire.'

'I will tell you,' answered the Owl, 'what I have been thinking of ever since the moon changed. You shall take it home with you and think about it too; and the next full moon you shall come again to me: we will compare our conclusions.'

'Delightful! delightful!' said the Cat. 'What is it? I will try this minute.'

'From the beginning,' replied the Owl, 'our race have been considering which first existed, the Owl or the egg. The Owl comes from the egg, but likewise the egg from the Owl.'

'Mercy!' said the Cat.

'From sunrise to sunset I ponder on it, O Cat! When I reflect on the beauty of the complete Owl I think that must have been first as the cause is greater than the effect. When I remember my own childhood I incline the other way.'

'Well, but how are we to find out?' said the Cat.

'Find out!' said the Owl. 'We can never find out. The beauty of the question is, that its solution is impossible. What would become of all our delightful reasonings, O unwise Cat, if we were so unhappy as to know?'

'But what in the world is the good of thinking about it, if you can't, O Owl?'

'My child, that is a foolish question. It is good, in order that the thoughts on these things may stimulate wonder. It is in wonder that the Owl is great.'

'Then you don't know anything at all,' said the Cat. 'What did you sit on Pallas's shoulder for? You must have gone to sleep.'

'Your tone is over-flippant, Cat, for philosophy. The highest of all knowledge is to know that we know nothing.'

The Cat made two great arches with her back and her tail.

'Bless the mother that laid you,' said she. 'You were dropped by mistake in a goose-nest. You won't do. I don't know much, but I am not such a creature as you, anyhow. A great white thing!'

She straightened her body, stuck her tail up on end, and marched off with much dignity. But, though

she respected herself rather more than before, she was not on the way to the end of her difficulties. She tried all the creatures she met without advancing a step. They had all the old story, 'Do your duty.' But each had its own, and no one could tell her what hers was. Only one point they all agreed upon—the duty of getting their dinner when they were hungry. The day wore on, and she began to think she would like hers. Her meals came so regularly at home that she scarcely knew what hunger was; but now the sensation came over her very palpably, and she experienced quite new emotions as the hares and rabbits skipped about her, or as she spied a bird upon a tree. For a moment she thought she would go back and eat the Owl—he was the most useless creature she had seen; but on second thoughts she didn't fancy he would be nice: besides that, his claws were sharp and his beak too. Presently, however, as she sauntered down the path, she came on a little open patch of green, in the middle of which a fine fat Rabbit was sitting. There was no escape. The path ended there, and the bushes were so thick on each side that he couldn't get away except through her paws.

'Really,' said the Cat, 'I don't wish to be troublesome; I wouldn't do it if I could help it; but I am very hungry; I am afraid I must eat you. It is very unpleasant, I assure you, to me as well as to you.'

The poor Rabbit begged for mercy.

'Well,' said she, 'I think it is hard; I do really—and, if the law could be altered, I should be the first to welcome it. But what can a cat do? You eat the grass; I eat you. But, Rabbit, I wish you would do me a favour.'

'Anything to save my life,' said the Rabbit.

'It is not exactly that,' said the Cat; 'but I haven't

been used to killing my own food, and it is disagreeable. Couldn't you die? I shall hurt you dreadfully if I kill you.'

'Oh!' said the Rabbit, 'you are a kind Cat; I see it in your eyes, and your whiskers don't curl like those of the cats in the woods. I am sure you will spare me.'

'But, Rabbit, it is a question of principle. I have to do my duty; and the only duty I have, as far as I can make out, is to get my dinner.'

'If you kill me, Cat, to do your duty, I sha'n't be able to do mine.'

It was a doubtful point, and the Cat was new to casuistry. 'What is your duty?' said she.

'I have seven little ones at home—seven little ones, and they will all die without me. Pray let me go.'

'What! do you take care of your children?' said the Cat. 'How interesting! I should like to see that; take me.'

'Oh! you would eat them, you would,' said the Rabbit. 'No! better eat me than them. No, no.'

'Well, well,' said the Cat, 'I don't know; I suppose I couldn't answer for myself. I don't think I am right, for duty is pleasant, and it is very unpleasant to be so hungry; but I suppose you must go. You seem a good Rabbit. Are you happy, Rabbit?'

'Happy! oh, dear beautiful Cat! if you spare me to my poor babies!'

'Pooh, pooh!' said the Cat, peevishly; 'I don't want fine speeches; I meant whether you thought it worth while to be alive? Of course you do! It don't matter. Go, and keep out of my way; for, if I don't find something to eat, you may not get off another time. Get along, Rabbit.'

PART III.

IT was a great day in the Fox's cave. The eldest cub had the night before brought home his first goose, and they were just sitting down to it as the Cat came by.

'Ah, my young lady! what, you in the woods? Bad feeding at home, eh? Come out to hunt for yourself?'

The goose smelt excellent; the Cat couldn't help a wistful look. She was only come, she said, to pay her respects to her wild friends.

'Just in time,' said the Fox. 'Sit down and take a bit of meat; I see you want it. Make room, you cubs; place a seat for the lady.'

'Why, thank you,' said the Cat, 'yes; I acknowledge it is not unwelcome. Pray, don't disturb yourselves, young Foxes. I am hungry. I met a rabbit on my way here. I was going to eat him, but he talked so prettily I let him go.'

The cubs looked up from their plates, and burst out laughing.

'For shame, young rascals,' said their father. 'Where are your manners? Mind your business, and don't be rude.'

'Fox,' she said, when it was over, and the cubs were gone to play, 'you are very clever. The other creatures are all stupid.' The Fox bowed. 'Your family were always clever,' she continued. 'I have heard about them in the books they use in our schoolroom. It is many years since your ancestor stole the crow's dinner.'

'Don't say stole, Cat; it is not pretty. Obtained by superior ability.'

'I beg your pardon,' said the Cat; 'it is all living

with those men. That is not the point. Well, but I want to know whether you are any wiser or any better than Foxes were then?'

'Really,' said the Fox, 'I am what Nature made me. I don't know. I am proud of my ancestors, and do my best to keep up the credit of the family.'

'Well, but, Fox, I mean, do you improve? do I? do any of you? The men are always talking about doing their duty, and that, they say, is the way to improve, and to be happy. And as I was not happy I thought that had, perhaps, something to do with it, so I came out to talk to the creatures. They also had the old chant—duty, duty, duty; but none of them could tell me what mine was, or whether I had any.'

The Fox smiled. 'Another leaf out of your school-room,' said he. 'Can't they tell you there?'

'Indeed,' she said, 'they are very absurd. They say a great deal about themselves, but they only speak disrespectfully of us. If such creatures as they can do their duty, and improve, and be happy, why can't we?'

'They say they do, do they?' said the Fox. 'What do they say of me?'

The Cat hesitated.

'Don't be afraid of hurting my feelings, Cat. Out with it.'

'They do all justice to your abilities, Fox,' said she; 'but your morality, they say, is not high. They say you are a rogue.'

'Morality!' said the Fox. 'Very moral and good they are. And you really believe all that? What do they mean by calling me a rogue?'

'They mean, you take whatever you can get, without caring whether it is just or not.'

'My dear Cat, it is very well for a man, if he can't bear his own face, to paint a pretty one on a panel and

call it a looking-glass ; but you don't mean that it takes *you* in ?'

'Teach me,' said the Cat. 'I fear I am weak.'

'Who get justice from the men unless they can force it ? Ask the sheep that are cut into mutton. Ask the horses that draw their ploughs. I don't mean it is wrong of the men to do as they do ; but they needn't lie about it.'

'You surprise me,' said the Cat.

'My good Cat, there is but one law in the world. The weakest goes to the wall. The men are sharper-witted than the creatures, and so they get the better of them and use them. They may call it just, if they like : but when a tiger eats a man I guess he has just as much justice on his side as the man when he eats a sheep.'

'And that is the whole of it,' said the Cat. 'Well, it is very sad. What do you do with yourself ?'

'My duty, to be sure,' said the Fox ; 'use my wits and enjoy myself. My dear friend, you and I are on the lucky side. We eat and are not eaten.'

'Except by the hounds now and then,' said the Cat.

'Yes ; by brutes that forget their nature, and sell their freedom to the men,' said the Fox, bitterly. 'In the meantime my wits have kept my skin whole hitherto, and I bless Nature for making me a Fox and not a goose.'

'And are you happy, Fox ?'

'Happy ! yes, of course. So would you be if you would do like me, and use your wits. My good Cat, I should be as miserable as you if I found my geese every day at the cave's mouth. I have to hunt for them, lie for them, sneak for them, fight for them ; cheat those old fat farmers, and bring out what there is inside me ; and then I am happy—of course I am.'

And then, Cat, think of my feelings as a father last night, when my dear boy came home with the very young gosling which was marked for the Michaelmas dinner! Old Reineke himself wasn't more than a match for that young Fox at his years. You know our epic?'

'A little of it, Fox. They don't read it in our schoolroom. They say it is not moral; but I have heard pieces of it. I hope it is not all quite true.'

'Pack of stuff! it is the only true book that ever was written. If it is not, it ought to be. Why, that book is the law of the world—*la carrière aux talents*—and writing it was the honestest thing ever done by a man. That fellow knew a thing or two, and wasn't ashamed of himself when he did know. They are all like him, too, if they would only say so. There never was one of them yet who wasn't more ashamed of being called ugly than of being called a rogue, and of being called stupid than of being called naughty.'

'It has a roughish end, this life of yours, if you keep clear of the hounds, Fox,' said the Cat.

'What! a rope in the yard? Well, it must end some day; and when the farmer catches me I shall be getting old, and my brains will be taking leave of me; so the sooner I go the better, that I may disgrace myself the less. Better be jolly while it lasts, than sit mewing out your life and grumbling at it as a bore.'

'Well,' said the Cat, 'I am very much obliged to you. I suppose I may even get home again. I shall not find a wiser friend than you, and perhaps I shall not find another good-natured enough to entertain me so handsomely. But it is very sad.'

'Think of what I have said,' answered the Fox. 'I'll call at your house some night; you will take me a walk round the yard, and then I'll show you.'

'Not quite,' thought the Cat, as she trotted off.

'One good turn deserves another, that is true; and you have given me a dinner. But they have given me many at home, and I mean to take a few more of them; so I think you mustn't go round our yard.'

PART IV.

THE next morning, when the Dog came down to breakfast, he found his old friend sitting in her usual place on the hearth-rug.

'Oh! so you have come back?' said he. 'How d'ye do? You don't look as if you had had a very pleasant journey.'

'I have learnt something,' said the Cat. 'Knowledge is never pleasant.'

'Then it is better to be without it,' said the Dog.

'Especially better to be without knowing how to stand on one's hind legs, Dog,' said the Cat; 'still, you see, you are proud of it; but I have learnt a great deal, Dog. They won't worship you any more, and it is better for you; you wouldn't be any happier. What did you do yesterday?'

'Indeed,' said the Dog, 'I hardly remember. I slept after you went away. In the afternoon I took a drive in the carriage. Then I had my dinner. My maid washed me and put me to bed. There is the difference between you and me; you have to wash yourself and put yourself to bed.'

'And you really don't find it a bore, living like this? Wouldn't you like something to do? Wouldn't you like some children to play with? The Fox seemed to find it very pleasant.'

'Children, indeed!' said the Dog, 'when I have

got men and women. Children are well enough for foxes and wild creatures; refined dogs know better; and, for doing—can't I stand on my toes? can't I dance? at least, couldn't I before I was so fat?'

'Ah! I see everybody likes what he was bred to,' sighed the Cat. 'I was bred to do nothing, and I must like that. Train the cat as the cat should go, and the cat will be happy and ask no questions. Never seek for impossibilities, Dog. That is the secret.'

'And you have spent a day in the woods to learn that?' said he. 'I could have taught you that. Why, Cat, one day when you were sitting scratching your nose before the fire, I thought you looked so pretty that I should have liked to marry you; but I knew I couldn't, so I didn't make myself miserable.'

The Cat looked at him with her odd green eyes. 'I never wished to marry you, Dog; I shouldn't have presumed. But it was wise of you not to fret about it. Listen to me, Dog—listen. I met many creatures in the wood, all sorts of creatures, beasts and birds. They were all happy; they didn't find it a bore. They went about their work, and did it, and enjoyed it, and yet none of them had the same story to tell. Some did one thing, some another; and, except the Fox, each had got a sort of notion of doing its duty. The Fox was a rogue; he said he was; but yet he was not unhappy. His conscience never troubled him. Your work is standing on your toes, and you are happy. I have none, and this is why I am unhappy. When I came to think about it, I found every creature out in the wood had to get its own living. I tried to get mine, but I didn't like it, because I wasn't used to it; and as for knowing, the Fox, who didn't care to know anything except how to cheat greater fools than himself, was the cleverest fellow I came across. Oh! the Owl,

Dog—you should have heard the Owl. But I came to this, that it was no use trying to know, and the only way to be jolly was to go about one's own business like a decent Cat. Cats' business seems to be killing rabbits and such-like ; and it is not the pleasantest possible ; so the sooner one is bred to it the better. As for me, that have been bred to do nothing, why, as I said before, I must try to like that ; but I consider myself an unfortunate Cat.'

'So don't I consider myself an unfortunate Dog,' said her companion.

'Very likely you do not,' said the Cat.

By this time their breakfast was come in. The Cat ate hers, the Dog did penance for his ; and if one might judge by the purring on the hearth-rug, the Cat, if not the happiest of the two, at least was not exceedingly miserable.

FABLES.

I.—THE LIONS AND THE OXEN.

ONCE upon a time a number of cattle came out of the desert to settle in the broad meadows by a river. They were poor and wretched, and they found it a pleasant exchange ; except for a number of lions, who lived in the mountains near, and who claimed a right, in consideration of permitting the cattle to remain, to eat as many as they wanted among them. The cattle submitted, partly because they were too weak to help it, partly because the lions said it was the will of Jupiter ; and the cattle believed them. And so they went on for many ages, till at last, from better feeding, the cattle grew larger and stronger, and multiplied into great numbers ; and at the same time, from other causes, the lions had much diminished ; they were fewer, smaller, and meaner-looking than they had been ; and, except in their own opinion of themselves, and in their appetites, which were more enormous than ever, there was nothing of the old lion left in them.

One day a large Ox was quietly grazing, when one of these lions came up, and desired the Ox to lie down, for he wanted to eat him. The Ox raised his head, and gravely protested ; the Lion growled ; the Ox was mild yet firm. The Lion insisted upon his legal right, and they agreed to refer the matter to Minos.

When they came into court, the Lion accused the Ox of having broken the laws of the beasts. The Lion was king, and the others were bound to obey. Prescriptive usage was clearly on the Lion's side. Minos called on the Ox for his defence.

The Ox said that, without consent of his own being asked, he had been born into the meadow. He did not consider himself much of a beast, but, such as he was, he was very happy, and gave Jupiter thanks. Now, if the Lion could show that the existence of lions was of more importance than that of oxen in the eyes of Jupiter, he had nothing more to say, he was ready to sacrifice himself. But this Lion had already eaten a thousand oxen. Lions' appetites were so insatiable that he was forced to ask whether they were really worth what was done for them,—whether the life of one lion was so noble that the lives of thousands of oxen were not equal to it? He was ready to own that lions had always eaten oxen, but lions when they first came to the meadow were a different sort of creature, and they themselves, too (and the Ox looked complacently at himself), had improved since that time. Judging by appearances, though they might be fallacious, he himself was quite as good a beast as the Lion. If the lions would lead lives more noble than oxen could live, once more he would not complain. As it was, he submitted that the cost was too great.

Then the Lion put on a grand face and tried to roar; but when he opened his mouth he disclosed a jaw so drearily furnished that Minos laughed, and told the Ox it was his own fault if he let himself be eaten by such a beast as that. If he persisted in declining, he did not think the Lion would force him.

II.—THE FARMER AND THE FOX.

A FARMER, whose poultry-yard had suffered severely from the foxes, succeeded at last in catching one in a trap. ‘Ah, you rascal!’ said he, as he saw him struggling, ‘I’ll teach you to steal my fat geese!—you shall hang on the tree yonder, and your brothers shall see what comes of thieving!’ The Farmer was twisting a halter to do what he threatened, when the Fox, whose tongue had helped him in hard pinches before, thought there could be no harm in trying whether it might not do him one more good turn.

‘You will hang me,’ he said, ‘to frighten my brother foxes. On the word of a fox they won’t care a rabbit-skin for it; they’ll come and look at me; but you may depend upon it, they will dine at your expense before they go home again! ’

‘Then I shall hang you for yourself, as a rogue and a rascal,’ said the Farmer.

‘I am only what Nature, or whatever you call the thing, chose to make me,’ the Fox answered. ‘I didn’t make myself.’

‘You stole my geese,’ said the man.

‘Why did Nature make me like geese, then?’ said the Fox. ‘Live and let live; give me my share, and I won’t touch yours; but you keep them all to yourself.’

‘I don’t understand your fine talk,’ answered the Farmer; ‘but I know that you are a thief, and that you deserve to be hanged.’

His head is too thick to let me catch him so, thought the Fox; I wonder if his heart is any softer! ‘You are taking away the life of a fellow-creature,’ he said; ‘that’s a responsibility—it is a curious thing, that life,

and who knows what comes after it? You say I am a rogue—I say I am not; but at any rate I ought not to be hanged—for if I am not, I don't deserve it; and if I am, you should give me time to repent!' I have him now, thought the Fox; let him get out if he can.

'Why, what would you have me do with you?' said the man.

'My notion is that you should let me go, and give me a lamb, or goose or two, every month, and then I could live without stealing: but perhaps you know better than me, and I am a rogue; my education may have been neglected; you should shut me up, and take care of me, and teach me. Who knows but in the end I may turn into a dog?'

'Very pretty,' said the Farmer; 'we have dogs enough, and more, too, than we can take care of, without you. No, no, Master Fox, I have caught you, and you shall swing, whatever is the logic of it. There will be one rogue less in the world, anyhow.'

'It is mere hate and unchristian vengeance,' said the Fox.

'No, friend,' the Farmer answered, 'I don't hate you, and I don't want to revenge myself on you; but you and I can't get on together, and I think I am of more importance than you. If nettles and thistles grow in my cabbage-garden, I don't try to persuade them to grow into cabbages; I just dig them up. I don't hate them; but I feel somehow that they mustn't hinder me with my cabbages; and that I must put them away; and so, my poor friend, I am sorry for you, but I am afraid you must swing.'

PARABLE OF THE BREAD-FRUIT TREE.

IT was after one of those heavy convulsions which have divided era from era, and left mankind to start again from the beginning, that a number of brave men gathered together to raise anew from the ground a fresh green home for themselves. The rest of the surviving race were sheltering themselves amidst the old ruins, or in the caves on the mountains, feeding on husks and shells ; but these men with clear heads and brave hearts ploughed and harrowed the earth, and planted seeds, and watered them, and watched them ; and the seeds grew and shot up with the spring, but one was larger and fairer than the rest, and the other plants seemed to know it, for they crawled along till they reached the large one ; and they gathered round it ; and clung to it and grew into it ; and soon they became one great stem, with branching roots feeding it as from many fountains. Then the men got great heart in them when they saw that, and they laboured more bravely, digging about it in the hot sun, till at last it became great and mighty, and its roots went down into the heart of the earth, and its branches stretched over all the plain.

Then many others of mankind, when they saw the tree was beautiful, came down and gathered under it,

and those who had raised it received them with open arms, and they all sat under its shade together, and gathered its fruits, and made their homes there, rejoicing in its loveliness. And ages passed away, and all that generation passed away, and still the tree grew stronger and fairer, and their children's children watched it age after age, as it lived on and flowered and seeded. And they said in their hearts, the tree is immortal—it will never die. They took no care of the seed ; the scent of the flowers and the taste of the sweet fruit was all they thought of : and the winds of heaven, and the wild birds, and the beasts of the field caught the stray fruits and seed-dust, and bore the seed away, and scattered it in far-off soils.

And by-and-by, at a great great age, the tree at last began to cease to grow, and then to faint and droop : its leaves were not so thick, its flowers were not so fragrant ; and from time to time the night winds, which before had passed away, and had been never heard, came moaning and sighing among the branches. And the men for a while doubted and denied—they thought it was the accident of the seasons ; and then a branch fell, and they said it was a storm, and such a storm as came but once in a thousand years. At last there could be no doubt that the leaves were thin and sere and scanty—that the sun shone through them—that the fruit was tasteless. But the generation was gone away which had known the tree in its beauty, and so men said it was always so—its fruits were never better—its foliage never was thicker.

So things went on, and from time to time strangers would come among them, and would say, Why are you sitting here under the old tree ? there are young trees grown of the seed of this tree, far away, more beautiful than it ever was ; see, we have brought you

leaves and flowers to show you. But the men would not listen. They were angry, and some they drove away, and some they killed, and poured their blood round the roots of the tree, saying, They have spoken evil of our tree; let them feed it now with their blood. At last some of their own wiser ones brought out specimens of the old fruits, which had been laid up to be preserved, and compared them with the present bearing, and they saw that the tree was not as it had been; and such of them as were good men reproached themselves, and said it was their own fault. They had not watered it; they had forgotten to manure it. So, like their first fathers, they laboured with might and main, and for a while it seemed as if they might succeed, and for a few years branches, which were almost dead, when the spring came round put out some young green shoots again. But it was only for a few years; there was not enough of living energy in the tree. Half the labour which was wasted on it would have raised another nobler one far away. So the men grew soon weary, and looked for a shorter way; and some gathered up the leaves and shoots which the strangers had brought, and grafted them on, if perhaps they might grow; but they could not grow on a dying stock, and they, too, soon drooped and became as the rest. And others said, Come, let us tie the preserved fruits on again; perhaps they will join again to the stem, and give it back its life. But there were not enough, for only a few had been preserved; so they took painted paper and wax and clay, and cut sham leaves and fruits of the old pattern, which for a time looked bright and gay, and the world, who did not know what had been done, said—See, the tree is immortal: it is green again. Then some believed, but many saw that it was a sham, and liking better to

bear the sky and sun, without any shade at all, than to live in a lie, and call painted paper leaves and flowers, they passed out in search of other homes. But the larger number stayed behind ; they had lived so long in falsehood that they had forgotten there was any such thing as truth at all ; the tree had done very well for them—it would do very well for their children. And if their children, as they grew up, did now and then happen to open their eyes and see how it really was, they learned from their fathers to hold their tongues about it. If the little ones and the weak ones believed, it answered all purposes, and change was inconvenient. They might smile to themselves at the folly which they countenanced, but they were discreet, and they would not expose it. This is the state of the tree, and of the men who are under it, at this present time :—they say it still does very well. Perhaps it does—but, stem and boughs and paper leaves, it is dry for the burning, and if the lightning touches it, those who sit beneath will suffer.

COMPENSATION.

ONE day an Antelope was lying with her fawn at the foot of a flowering Mimosa. The weather was intensely sultry, and a Dove, who had sought shelter from the heat among the leaves, was cooing above her head.

‘Happy bird !’ said the Antelope. ‘Happy bird ! to whom the air is given for an inheritance, and whose flight is swifter than the wind. At your will you alight upon the ground, at your will you sweep into the sky, and fly races with the driving clouds ; while I, poor I, am bound a prisoner to this miserable earth, and wear out my pitiable life crawling to and fro upon its surface.’

Then the Dove answered, ‘It is sweet to sail along the sky, to fly from land to land, and coo among the valleys ; but, Antelope, when I have sat above amidst the branches and watched your little one close its tiny lips upon your breast, and feed its life on yours, I have felt that I could strip off my wings, lay down my plumage, and remain all my life upon the ground only once to know such blessed enjoyment.’

The breeze sighed among the boughs of the Mimosa, and a voice came trembling out of the rustling leaves : ‘If the Antelope mourns her destiny, what should the Mimosa do ? The Antelope is the swiftest among the animals. It rises in the morning ; the ground flies under its feet—in the evening it is a hundred miles

away. The Mimosa is feeding its old age on the same soil which quickened its seed cells into activity. The seasons roll by me and leave me in the old place. The winds sway among my branches, as if they longed to bear me away with them, but they pass on and leave me behind. The wild birds come and go. The flocks move by me in the evening on their way to the pleasant waters. I can never move. My cradle must be my grave.'

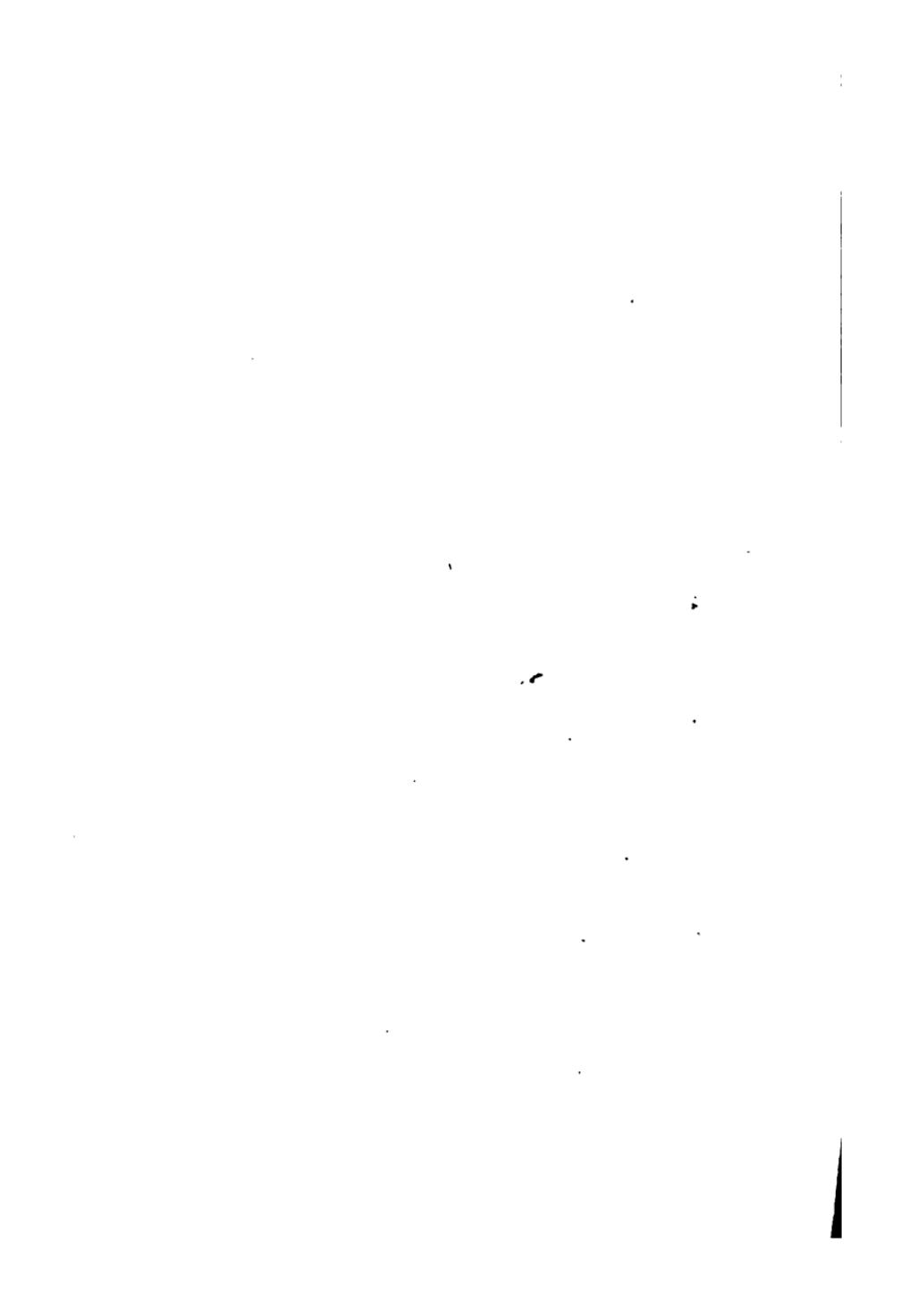
Then from below, at the root of the tree, came a voice which neither bird, nor Antelope, nor tree had ever heard, as a Rock Crystal from its prison in the limestone followed on the words of the Mimosa.

'Are ye all unhappy?' it said. 'If ye are, then what am I? Ye all have life. You! O Mimosa, you! whose fair flowers year by year come again to you, ever young, and fresh, and beautiful—you who can drink the rain with your leaves, who can wanton with the summer breeze, and open your breast to give a home to the wild birds, look at me and be ashamed. I only am truly wretched.'

'Alas!' said the Mimosa, 'we have life, which you have not, it is true. We have also what you have not, its shadow—death. My beautiful children, which year by year I bring out into being, expand in their lowness only to die. Where they are gone I too shall soon follow, while you will flash in the light of the last sun which rises upon the earth.'

END OF VOL. II.





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